# THE CASE Of the COMPANY of GROCERS STATED;

And their Condition in their Preſent Circumſtances Truly Repreſented:

Together with a ſhort Account of their ORIGINAL; How Eminent they have been in this CITY; And alſo of ſome of their Antient PRIVILEDGES and USAGES.

And an Account of the Rebuilding and Enlarging their Hall, Conſumed by the Fire, happening *Anno.* 1666.

To which is Added

A Short Account of their Charter and Confirmation, with Enlargement of Priviledges granted by his late Majeſty, King *Charles* the Second, of Bleſſed Memory, upon their Surrender, and Petition, after the *Quo Warranto*, brought againſt them.

And their By-Laws and Ordinances thereupon made, for well Governing their Members and Myſtery.

Deſigned for Information, Satisfaction, and Benefit of the Members, and Vindication of the COMPANY,

And Encouragement of their

BENEFACTORS.

Licenſed *March* 29. 1686. *Rob. Midgeley.*

*LONDON.*

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BODLEIANA
BIBLIOTHECA

## *To the Right Honourable* George *Lord* Jeffreys, *Baron of* Wem, *Lord High Chancellour of* England, *and one of the Lords of His Majeſties moſt Honourable Privy Council.*

*My Lord,*

AS I muſt ever humbly acknowledge, it is from your Lordſhips Favour, I am continued in this my Station; ſo I hold my ſelf obliged to give ſome Teſtimony to your Lordſhip, and the World, I have endeavoured to purſue my Duty, as the moſt grateful Acknowledgement I am able to make; though his Majeſty hath been graciouſly pleaſed to call you ſo near himſelf to his Councils and Service in his *Arduis regni*, yet you cannot be out of the reach of the humble Addreſſes of the meaneſt Subject. Therefore I humbly take confidence, from the Reſpect your Lordſhip hath ſhewn the *Grocers* Company, in becoming a Member of their Society, (whereof his late Majeſty of Bleſſed Memory thought it no Derogation to his Soveraignty to be Chief) to lay open before your Honor their Condition, in the following Sheets; as well aſſured (if your Lordſhip vouchſafe to inſpect them) you can better apprehend my Senſe therein, then I am able to expreſs it on their behalf. It is too well known, they long languiſhed in Ruines, and under Reproach: But having now the benefit of the Sun-ſhine to gather Life and Motion, from the Effects of their late Charter and Confirmation, and the further aid and aſſiſtance of kind Benefactors; they can (with all humble Submiſſion) never have better grounds of hope for Deliverance, then from *the benign influence of this Conjunction of Planets, ſo near the Sun.* Pardon (I moſt humbly beſeech your Honour) this my Preſumption; and upon account of my Dutifull Meaning be pleaſed to permit the humble Addreſſer to ſubſcribe himſelf

*May it pleaſe your Lordſhip,*

*Your Honors moſt Obliged, Faithful,*

*and moſt Humble Servant,*

W. Ravenhill, *Clerk of the Company of* Grocers.

*To*

*To the Right Honourable* John *Lord* Sheffeild, *Baron of* Butterwicke, *Earl of* Mulgrave, *Knight of the moſt Noble Order of the Garter, Lord Chamberlain of his Majeſties Houſhold, and one of the Lords of his Majeſties moſt Honourable Privy Council.*

*My Lord,*

THE following Sheets were prepared and publiſhed for the Service of the Company of *Grocers* (ſoon after I was choſen their Clerk) and for Satisfaction of thoſe Members, who promoted my Election: And, as I endeavoured by my faithful Service, to Record my Title in their Hearts; So from thence alone (as the procuring Cauſe) I muſt humbly acknowledge my ſelf to be therein confirmed by Charter, deſiring theſe two may be inſeperably annexed; that I may hold my Place, both as a good Subject, and a faithful Servant. And ſince I am ſo happy, as to be therein inrolled your Lordſhips Servant, I humbly crave leave (on my Maſters behalf) to tell the World, That the *Grocers* muſt ever reckon it their chief Boaſt and Glory, and acknowledge it their peculiar Happineſs, to have their Charter and Confirmation, paſſed under the Conduct of ſo Illuſtrious a Maſter. God hath diſtinguiſhed your Lordſhip, by thoſe eminent Virtues, which have commended you to the Favour of two moſt Wiſe and Juſt Princes. And as you might have been Styled our Vice-roy to his late Majeſty, (of Bleſſed Memory who graciouſly condeſcended to own himſelf our Maſter and) by your Honour (bearing his Royal Command) to require his Attorney Generall to diſpatch our Charter (in the utmoſt extent of Law) to our advantage: So we may now (with humble Confidence) aſſure our ſelves we ſhall not want a friendly Mediator, with our moſt Gracious Soveraign, his moſt dear Brother, and Lawful Succeſſour; whoſe Goodneſs ſo charmes the worſt of his Enemies, that we cannot deſpair of his Benignity, towards ſo proper an Object of his Bounty and Charity. And ſince you are pleaſed (after the example of many of the Patriots, and renowned Heroes of Old) to divert your ſelf in Merchandizing; we take the more freedom to tell your Lordſhip, That this Company (for that reaſon) above all others in *London*, may juſtly claim an Intereſt in you, as having bred many eminent Merchants, from whoſe Loyns have ſprung ſeveral Noble Families in this Kingdom. And for its Antiquity, may derive its Originall from the *Romans* themſelves, who were Merchants trading in *Rome* 1700 years ſince in Spicery; and from thence may modeſtly be preſumed to have tranſplanted themſelves (with their Conqueſt of this Iſland) into this City, under the Denomination of Pepperers, long before they were incorporated by the name of *Grocers*. And as they have been Eminent many Hundred years, for a Seminary of Merchants, and Nurſery of Charities; ſo Providence hath Seated them in the very Center of this Metropolis, once the Manſion-Houſe of a Noble Peer of this Realm. Neither have they been ſhort in their Duty as Subjects: For upon the breaking out of the late Unnatural Rebellion, they accommodated his Majeſties late Father, King *Charles*, the Royal Martyr of Bleſſed Memory, with a conſiderable Sum of Money in his greateſt Exigencies; and now of late, in times of greateſt difficulty in this City, they gave ample Demonſtrations of their Sincerity towards the Crown, and Government by Law eſtabliſhed; their greateſt unhappineſs having been for ſeveral years paſt, to languiſh under the ſad Effects of War and Fire, which conſumed their whole Revenue in *London*, and rendred them uncapable of diſcharging their Debts and Charities, which hath much Eclipſed them, and occaſioned many of their Members to Incorporate themſelves in other Companies,

Companies, who ſhould have born their Proportion in diſcharge of that Burthen. But we hope to put a ſtop to that growing Evil, by the aid of our new Charter; injoyning all uſeing the Myſtery, from henceforth to come into the Company, and by your Honours favourable Patronage, to have our Antient Rights Eſtabliſhed, and this Company reſtored (as it was once) fruitful in Eminent Citizens, who may become Pillars to bear up the Grandeur of Government in this great City, which hath in all Ages been eſteemed very uſeful and Serviceable to the Crown, as it were, giving Legs and Wings to Navigation, by which alone this Iſle hath been able to give Laws to all the World: And indeed, the whole Nation hath ever Ebbed and Flowed, according to the Splendor and Eclipſe of Trade and Commerce here. And though ſhe ought for ever to be aſhamed, and to humble her ſelf even in the duſt, for her Horrid Rebellion againſt the Royal Martyr King *Charles* the Firſt; and for her no leſs Ingratitude towards his late Sacred Majeſty, of Bleſſed Memory; yet moſt humbly it may be preſum'd, 'tis highly the Intereſt of the Crown of *England*, to advance the Trade and Proſperity of this City, *as its great Chamber*, which the more rich and Populous, the more ſerviceable it may be upon all Occaſions, when (by direct Rules preſcribed to curb all Sedition, and managed by the Senators under the Conduct of their Royal Soveraign himſelf) it may be weilded as one great Engine, by the Helm in his own hand.

Thus, this City (if His Majeſty will be ſo Graciouſly pleaſed) trained up and diſciplined, ever in her riſing Proſperity, owning all her Greatneſs to his Royal Favour and Bounty, and as a ſenſible Creature naturally Faithful and Obſequious to its preſent Benefactor:) may (in a ſhort time) become the *Emporium* of the World, and pay willing Service and Allegiance to its Lawful Soveraign, and thereby advance his Majeſties Grandeur and Intereſt, both at home, and abroad, above all the Kings of *England*, that have gone before him: Having thus melted her down, he may caſt her in his own Mold, and be more kind to her, than ever they have been; and ſo by his own Beneficence to her augment his own Soveraignty. But as Sedition in the City (when under Irregular Conduct) gave Harbour to ſeveral Libertines, and Lawleſs Perſons, favoured by the Faction: So (with all humble Submiſſion) it may be equally inconvenient, for both City and Suburbs, to increaſe and multiply with Forreigners and Natives, trading under no reſtraint of Government, whereby they will be capable (as not bearing any ſhare of the publick Charge of the Government of the City) not only to under-ſell the Citizens, who are under the moſt regular Oeconomy (for Civil Government) in the World; but alſo to contrive counterfeit & deceitful Ways, in all kinds of Trading, and Dealing, the Epidemical Diſeaſe ever Springing from ſuch Liberty, without any inſpection or controul; which may ſoon ruine the City, to the total Subverſion (which God forbid) of innumerable Charities, founded by Pious Benefactors in Ages paſt, and turn all to a Receptacle for innumerable Vermine, (Lawleſs and Diſcontented Perſons) too apt to turn Levellers, and follow any Leaders that ſhall head a Faction; the natural Conſequent of Trading and Commerce, without the Sanction of ſtrict Laws and Ordinances, to regulate and inſpect the Abuſes, and Deceits, in the Species of every Myſtery: For as they live themſelves, without Law or Rule, ſo they train up their Servants to excell in nothing, but what is unlawful or irregular.

And now (My Lord) may I (with like humble Submiſſion) ſpeak the Senſe of many Loyal and Worthy Men in this City, who have long waited for ſome good *Samaritane*: No Man can be better qualified as a proper Medium, between his Majeſty, and this City, than your Lordſhip, as a Member (ſo highly accompliſhed) of the one, and being happy in ſo favourable an Acceſs to the other, to repreſent their Caſe, and become their Advocate; and you could never have a better opportunity to demonſtrate your Loyalty to the King, and lay a more ſure and laſting Foundation of true Honour to your ſelf: A Work ſo acceptable, that I am well aſſured (I humbly hope) the Lord High Chancellor of *England* (whoſe great Soul is moſt aptly diſpoſed to promote ſo extenſive a Good) and being himſelf a Member of the *Grocers*, as well as the *Drapers*, will (according to his wonted Benignity towards all honeſt and Loyal Citizens) cheerfully adviſe and aſſiſt your Lordſhip therein. This is a God-like work, and in time (put in execution) may make you both, the Joy of the whole Land, and healing Phyſicians to Mother and Daughter, (I mean the City and Nation) in thus becoming Advocates for both.

My Noble Lord, I have thus adventured moſt humbly to Addreſs my ſelf, preſuming I might the more freely, as being daily Converſant, where I may have better Information, and take notice of thoſe things which may not be known either to Men of greater Parts, and far above me, or ſuch of inferior Rank, as have no Inclination to diſcharge ſo great a Duty; humbly hoping your Lordſhip will diſpence with my Zeal herein, on behalf of my Mother the City, and my Miſtreſs the Company, deſiring to approve my ſelf in all Duty, and Faithfulneſs to both, as

*May it pleaſe your Lordſhip,*

*Your Honours moſt Obſequious,*

*Faithful, and moſt Humble Servant,*

W. Ravenhill, *Clerk of the Company of* Grocers.

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*To*

## *To the Right Honourable* George *Earl of* Berkeley, *Viſcount* Durſley, *Baron of* Berkeley, Moubray, Seagrave, *and* Bruce, *and one of the Lords of His Majeſties moſt Honourable Privy Council.*

*My Lord,*

IT is ſufficiently manifeſt, to all that have the Honour to know your Lordſhip, that you have given a moſt clear Demonſtration in your ſelf, of what the Poet ſo long ſince obſerved * that true Nobility is but Virtue exemplified in a more Glorious Character: All that the moſt excellent Tongue or Pen can expreſs more, may favour of Flattery, or empty Praiſe, by rather Diminiſhing then Augmenting ſuch real Worth: However, that I may purſue the great Duty, of *Suum cuique Tribuere*, I preſume to make it known to the World, how Eminent a Member the *Grocers* have to glory in; and withal, that in becoming ſo, you rendred them no more, than a Reputation ſuitable to their Merit; for though the Honourable *East-India* Company have cauſe to boaſt of ſo Noble a Patriot, and that you moſt deſervedly preſide in the Honourable Society of Merchants, trading to the *Levant* Seas, and in both employing your Talent, for the Service of your Prince, and Good of your Country: Yet, My Lord, ſhould theſe Societies be both traced to their Original, they muſt own themſelves the Offspring of the *Grocers*, who were the firſt Nurſery of Merchants, in this City trading abroad, and (I may boldly affirm) gave Being at firſt to our Navigation: As may appear by Ancient Records of Entries of Apprentices, to Members of this Company; which though it hath for ſome time languiſhed under the ſad Effects of War, and Fire, Eclipſing its Luſtre, yet (Bleſſed be God) She may not unfitly eſteem her ſelf to be the beſt Foundation, (both for Scituation and ancient Stock) for good Patronage of any Corporation in this City; his late Majeſty of Bleſſed Memory (whom ſhe might glory in as her Great Maſter) having been graciouſly pleaſed by Charter to reſtrain, and ſettle the Myſtery, with Enlargement of Priviledges, to make way for thoſe advantages of future Improvement, to preſerve it in a Succeſſion, and continue it a Seminary of Merchants, and good Citizens, and a Nurſery of Charities; and for theſe reaſons ſhe may (with an humble Boldneſs) claim aid and aſſiſtance from every Member, to raiſe and reſtore her to her priſtine Splendour, as a work no way Derogatory to the moſt renowned Heroe, but as beſt becoming the greateſt, as well as the beſt, both of Subjects, and Chriſtians; wherein as a poor Labourer I joyfully ſerve in the meaneſt Office, and aſpire to no Higher Title than to be eſteemed

* *Nobilitas Sola eſt, atque unica virtus.* Juv.

*May it pleaſe your Lordſhip,*

*Your Honours moſt Faithfull,*

*And Humble Servant,*

W. Ravenhill, *Clerk of the Company of* Grocers.

*To*

# *To the Right Honourable Sir* Thomas Chicheley *Knight, Chancellor of the Dutchy of* Lancaſter, *and one of His Majeſties moſt Honourable Privy Council.*

*Sir,*

THough it be an undoubted Maxime amongſt Wiſe Men, * that nothing can truly enoble a Man, or be ſo properly called his own, as what he doth himſelf, and his own Acquiſitions; yet nothing is more frequent in this degenerate Age, than for theſe Men, who inherit leaſt of their Parents Virtue, and Honour, to pride and boaſt themſelves, in their Noble Extraction; * Though at the ſame time, by their wilfull Ignorance, and Debaucheries, they may be truly ſaid, not only to have forfeited all pretence unto, but to have inhumanely Butchered, the Honor of their Families. I may adventure (without flattery) to affirm, that if any Member of the *Grocers* Company (which for many Hundred years hath been moſt prolifick of any Society in *London* of Honourable and Worthy Members) may Glory in their Anceſtors, you have much more cauſe ſo to do, and that in ſo doing you revive the true Honor of the *Grocers*, who have been fruitfull in ſuch an Offspring. I find in old Records, as Ancient as King *Henry* the Fourth, three Brothers of your Anceſtors, the Eldeſt named *Henry Chicheley*, being then Lord Arch-Biſhop of *Canterbury*, a moſt worthy Prelate, whoſe excellency appears in the Divine Character of his Life written by Dr. *Ducke*, the Second Brother *William*, and *Robert* the Third (from whoſe Loyns you deſcended) both in their turns Sheriffs and Aldermen of this City, and Members of the *Grocers* Company: And herein I am happy to have an inſtance ſo near our ſelves, making good one Article of my humble Exhortation to Charity in the cloſe of my following Sheets, that if any cauſe can be aſſigned, for continuance of Honor, and Eſtate, in a Name and Family; it muſt be in a pious, and charitable Foundation laid by their Anceſtors, as it were, leaving God an Overſeer, to preſerve a plaſtick Virtue in the Family, to Spring again into Honor and Eſtate. And indeed, I cannot have a better Demonſtration of this Truth, then in your Self, and Family: Your ſaid great Anceſtor *Robert* (who was afterwards twice Lord Mayor of this City, and a moſt Liberal Benefactor to the Poor) having been the Pious Founder of the Pariſh Church of St. *Stephens Walbrook*, (which continues to this Day in the Donation of the *Grocers*) upon a plat of Ground, by him purchaſed of them, for that Sacred uſe, did at his own Coſts and Charges, compleat the Building thereof in the Reign of King *Henry* the Sixth; as may at large appear in *Stowes* Survey, the beſt Evidence left of ſuch Antiquities in *London*; which Church, being Conſumed by the late dreadful Fire *Anno* 1666. Your Honour (as undoubted Heir of his Piety and Virtue) was Co-adjutor with the then Lord Mayor, in laying the Foundation, and a liberal Benefactor in rebuilding thereof.

May the great God of Heaven (whoſe Stewards they all are) ſtir up the Hearts of the preſent Generations, after the example of thoſe worthy Members of Old, who have left us ſuch Foundation of Charities, liberally to contribute towards the repairing of our great Loſs, ſuſtained by the ſad Effects of War, and Fire, and ſo reſtore this Company to a Capacity of diſcharging their Debts and Charities, and anſwering the great Truſt left them by their Pious Benefactors; that the Poor may bleſs them in the Gates, and the Childrens Children feel and find the ſweet Influences and Effects (as you now do) in the Generations to come.

And

* *Nam genus & proavos & quæ non fecimus ipſi vix ea noſtra voco,* Ovid.

* *Stemmata quid proſunt quia prodeſt Pontice longo Sanguine cenſeri pictos que oſtendere vultus, in curuis Stantes Æmilianos* Juv.

And since you are so near allyed to the *Grocers* by a lineal Descent, and have been pleased to incorporate your self a Member of their Society, you so became one of my Masters; to whom I owe both Duty, and Service; I therefore humbly beg leave to present you with the following Account of them, and their State and Condition in their present Circumstances; and that you will receive me into your Favour, as

*SIR,*

*Your Honours most Faithful,*

*And Humble Servant,*

W. Ravenhill, *Clerk of the Company of* Grocers.

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## *To the Highly Honoured Sir* John Cutler, *Knight and Baronet, Master of the Worshipful Company of* Grocers, London.

*Sir*,

I Should be worse than Brutish, if I were not deeply sensible of those various Effects of Providence, that attended my Election, especially in diverting you from appearing for one of my Competitors, when your Influence on the whole Society would have turned the Scales against me, and * in an Eminent Members appearing vigorously for me (of whose Favour I had not before the least hope) But above all, I must for ever (with all humble thankfulness) acknowledge the infinite goodness of God to me; that after a Habit of 28 years Intemperance (as hard to be changed as the Leopards Spots, or the *Æthiopian*'s Skin) for which I was openly there that Day recriminated for a Drunkard into a Proverb, (from the Circumstances attending that time) he was pleased so to awaken and turn me, that from thence I became (I may truly say) Diametrically opposite a Sober Man: And this Grace was not bestowed upon me in vain, (Blessed be God) I have emproved it to an higher end, and (however some may esteem of me) my Conscience bears me Witness, I have pursued my Duty to my utmost Power, and with unwearied Industry (by Inspecting Records, and Papers, at the Hall, and abroad) out of Confusion composed, and (at my own Charge) published the Companies Case in the following Sheets, and with no less Industry, most humbly moving and stirring up Worthy Members (after your great Example) to repair, and beautifie the Hall; as the only means, to remove their Reproach, and preserve a Succession in the Company. Two things Chiefly induced me so to do, the first to satisfie their Creditors, and vindicate the Company; by manifesting to the World, how they first Contracted their Debts, upon unavoidable Emergencies, and not by Rebellion, and luxurious Feasting, (as some of our Creditors have slanderously reported;) what Losses they had sustained; which rendred them uncapable to pay; what measures they had further taken therein; and how far discharged of their own Benevolences, beyond any other Company (in their Circumstances) in *London*, thereby to avoid chargeable Suits and Prosecutions, and continual disturbance to the Governing Members, wherein I obtained my wished end; for the Creditors being thereby made sensible, how vain and fruitless such Suits would prove (the Companies Estate being charged with their yearly Charities, and that all their hopes must arise of Benevolence) gave the Company respite (in a great measure) of those Clamors, and Troubles; insomuch that there is not one Suit now Depending against the Company: The second was, to represent the bleeding condition of the Company, under their various Pressures, and every day declining under all Discouragements, their Benefactors failing, their Members some dying, and many going into other Companies, who should have taken their Freedom here, and the Apprentices (the Seed of Posterity) who were heretofore invited by so many helps, into this Society, now dreaded to be bound here; fearing their Freedom hereafter, might prove their Bondage: But this latter being a work of time, I could not so soon accomplish it, however I I still Encouraged my self (notwithstanding all Difficulties) and proceeded in my Design, till the *QUO WARRANTO* interven'd, which (though it threatned more danger) yet by good Providence, our Charter was Confirmed and Enlarged, for the settling the *Grocery*, by the Aid and Patronage, and under the Conduct, of our late great Master, so as to lay a Foundation, to obviate and prevent a fatal Dissolution, by decay of Members, in obliging the Apprentices, (to all using the Mystery) to be bound to Members of this Company, to preserve a Succession therein, with other Priviledges therein inserted for

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* Sir James Edwards *whose kindness then and afterwards to me I must ever remember with the most grateful acknowledgements.*

the Benefit and better Government of this Company; and now I have compleated the latter part, which I have Comprized in two Sheets of Paper. In the one I have truly ſtated the Companies yearly Revenues, and the yearly Charities charged by the Donors on every Branch, with what Overplus remains, and alſo what other Charities they are chargeable with yearly, on accompt of Money given them by other Benefactors, (in truſt) to purchaſe Lands, and Houſes to diſcharge them, together with the Arrears of the ſeveral Branches of each kind.

In the other Sheet I have ſtated the Companies Caſe briefly in general, and humbly propoſed (as the firſt thing neceſſary) how the Company may (as indeed they ought) in diſcharge of their Truſt, ſettle the Overplus of their Revenue (the whole being deſigned for Charity) and already made lyable thereunto, as a moſt righteous Diſpoſition to anſwer thoſe yearly Charities where they have waſted the Stock, and thereby prevent all attempts of Seizure and Sequeſtrations, by other Creditors, or proſecutions on the Statutes for Charitable uſes. And in the laſt place the total of their Debts by Bond, how much thereof they have paid, and what remains, and the Charge of new Building and Beautifying the Hall, with the ſmall Remainder of the Workmens Bills (as very fit to be firſt diſcharged) and have added ſome other Debts and Charities incumbent on the Company (if in a Solvent Condition) but which may be reſpited till God ſhall raiſe them into a better Capacity.

And now, I could wiſh the rule might hold in the *Grocers* Caſe, as in Phyſick That the knowledge of a Diſeaſe, amounts to half the Cure: I might ſpare this wiſh, would all follow your early and leading Example; and indeed the Company, could do no leſs then chooſe you Maſter, when by their Charter his ſaid late Majeſty of Bleſſed Memory, under his great Seal conſtituted you their Elder Brother, which (of Old) was called the Father of the Family; and you may very well uſe the Apoſtles Language to them, though they have had many Maſters and Inſtructers, yet they have not had many Fathers; ſuch a Father, who had Compaſſion on us in our low Eſtate, even when we lay in Ruins and Aſhes, though (to our ſhame it may be ſpoken) you were left as a Land-mark in the midſt of our Ruins, and the Company (as it were) buried alive, until it pleaſed God to ſtir up the Hearts of other Worthy Members, (after your great Example) to repair, enlarge and beautifie our Hall, which (together with your Return thither to own us again) may be truly ſtiled, a Reſurrection of the Company of *Grocers*.

When Addreſs is made in a good Work, to a Man whoſe Soul by inordinate affection to it, is poſſeſſed of his Wealth, (for I cannot ſay his Soul doth Poſſeſs it, or is Maſter of it) his Anſwer uſually is (though his Ambitious Heart would take the Wall of a better Man) He will ſee others go before him; and thoſe others perhaps will not want the like Excuſe; and ſo they will keep their Mammon in a dreadful Exchange for their Soul, till Death ſevers them from it, and then (as too frequent Examples prove) leave it entailed with a Curſe, to do the Devil more Service in a looſe Prodigality.

But the undoubted Character of a good Man, is to do good like his Maker, though he have no Company, and his greateſt Joy is to find an Opportunity and an Object ſuitable to his Talent; and it increaſes his inward Comfort, that his God hath intruſted him with a Stock, and given him an Heart, (which is the greateſt Bleſſing in the World, and a Miracle in our Saviours Language, in a Rich man) ſo to beſtow it, when he ſees others are ſo backward in this one neceſſary Duty, whoſe ſure Reward is, Glory hereafter and a Bleſſing upon what he ſhall leave behind him. Having now prepared and finiſhed this my Deſign, in ſo happy a Period of time, I humbly crave leave, under the Patronage of ſo Great and Worthy a Maſter, to lay open this bleeding Caſe of the *Grocers*, as once *Anthony* did the Bloody Garments of the Murthered *Caſar* before the Senators, beſeeching God Almighty ſo to affect the Heart of every good Member, after the Example of thoſe good Members that have gone before, to be aiding and aſſiſting in ſo great and good a Work. And I could not (without Violation of my Duty) omit in the following Sheets, to rake out of Oblivion the Names and Memory of two, (amongſt ſo many) for all the reſt, to whom the *Grocers* may be ſaid to owe all they have at this Day: But their Names ſcarce known to the preſent Generation.

* Sir Henry Keble at his own Charge built Aldermary Church, and both he and Sir William Laxton were buried in one Vault in that Church, with a fair Monument and Epitaph for each thereof, Consumed by the Fire Anno 1666. But set forth at large in Stowes Survey.

* The first Sr. *Henry Keble* (once Lord Mayor) and a most Worthy Member of this Society, having first in his Life time lent the Company a great Sum of Mony, to supply their wants, on a Lease to him of their Hall and Revenue for 99 years, at a Pepper Corn Rent, and afterwards a farther Sum, (nigh to the whole value) to support them in their sinking Condition, on another Lease for 99 years in Reversion, so that he became (as it were) Proprietor of the whole, did afterwards by his last Will and Testament, dated in the sixth year of the Reign of King *Henry* the Eighth, freely give back all to the Company for ever. The other Sir *William Laxton*, also once Lord Mayor of this City, and a most Worthy Member, by Will and Deed executed in his Life time, about the twenty fourth year of the Reign of the same King *Henry* the Eighth, gave to the Company all their Revenue in *Cauning-street*, and the Lanes near thereunto adjoyning.

These good Mens works are greater then those of *Alexander*, or *Cæsar*, for theirs was laid in Blood and Oppression, and cannot be remembred in their Circumstances but with Horror. But those do not only render the Donors Immortal on Earth, but are always mentioned with a ravishing Resultance of Joy, and Delight, and grateful Reflection of the Mind: And their Names deserve to remain in Letters of Gold; and their Statues for ever as a Memorial to all Generations.

Some Men indeed are liberal enough with their Lips, and talk loud enough of Religion and Holiness. But such a Religion without Charity (in the Dialect of the Apostle) is like to a sounding Brass and a tinkling Cymbal.

* *Quis non miretur umbra tantum gratia ex alieno petitum Orbe.* Plin.

The Historian upbraids the *Roman* Luxury, that * (with so much cost and hazard) they should send to Forreign parts for Trees, that were beautiful, but barren, and produced a Shadow only, without fruit. Had he lived in this more illuminated age, how might he have reflected on many Zealots, who have dressed up their profession with Angelical Language, but their whole lives barren of Charity and good Works, the very Life and Soul of Religion.

The best Evidence and Test of a Mans Religion, is his Works according to the Canon of the Gospel, and that, also exemplified in a regular Life, calmly submitting to the Government they live under, and endeavour to be found diligent and faithful in their own Station.

Ibless God my greatest Ambition is to appear Faithful and Diligent in this my little Station, making the deliverance and prosperity of this Company, my great Aim: Which if I may be so happy as to live to see, and to reap the fruits of my own Industry therein, for a comfortable Subsistence, shall answer the unwearied Labours, sincere Endeavours, and most hearty Prayers of,

*SIR*,

*Your most Obliged, Humble*

*And Faithful Servant*,

W. Ravenhill, *Clerk of the Company of* Grocers.

*To*

*To the Memory of the highly Honoured ( and never to be forgotten among the* Grocers ) *Sir* Thomas Foot, *Knight and Baronet, Sir* John Frederick *Knight, Deceaſed, Sir* James Edwards, *Sir* John Moor, *Sir* Henry Tulſe, *and Sir* Benjamin Newland *Knights, and Aldermen,* Thomas Weſtern, John Jeffreys, Timothy Wade, John Jones, Thomas Turges, *and* Ralph Box, *Eſq; And to all the reſt of the Worthy Members of the Worſhipful Company of* Grocers, *that contributed and were aſſiſting to rebuild beautifie and enlarge their Hall ( conſumed by the dreadful Fire* Anno 1666 ) *ſo magnificently begun by that moſt Worthy Member and Benefactor, Sir* John Cutler *Knight and Baronet, our preſent Maſter.*

I find it approved and commended ( in Hiſtories of all Ages ) as a Duty incumbent on thoſe who have the Honor to ſerve as Secretaries in publick Capacities ( ſuppoſed beſt acquainted therewith ) to record the Worthy Actions of their Anceſtors, ſo as to tranſmit them to Poſterity; not only as an act of Juſtice to them, but as Paterns of Imitation to thoſe that ſhall ſucceed: Examples always making more deep and laſting Impreſſions, than the moſt Influential Precepts. If it be a Vertue in the meaneſt Peaſant ( keeping within his own Sphere ) to follow the foot-ſteps of his Superiors, in acts of Juſtice, I hold it a duty highly becoming me, in my Station under you, according to my weak Capacity, to leave ſome Account to the following Generations of this Society: Not only from whom they receive ſo commodious and beautiful a Manſion-Seat, but alſo the conſequent Advantages of it ( ſo far as it ſhall pleaſe God to bleſs your good Intentions ) to quicken them to become like Patriots.

*As for thoſe worthy Members and Benefactors, who have already Contributed, and ſhall be aiding in diſcharge of the Companies great Debts. (wherein alſo I cannot doubt of the help of thoſe, to whom I now moſt humbly Addreſs my ſelf) I purpoſe ( as in duty likewiſe bound) by Divine Aſſiſtance to Record, and with equal veneration to Commend them alſo to Poſterity; for I may with humble Submiſſion compare this Company (in its late deplorable Condition) to a Captive in Bondage under Chains; And by taking off the Sequeſtrations and new Building and Beautifying their Hall, and the Advantage of our late Charter, to have only her Chains and Shackles knockt off. But until ſhe ſhall be happily diſcharged of thoſe great Engagements, ſhe muſt remain uncapable to relieve her numerous Offspring, which have been long languiſhing in hope, and have no other Paps to give them Suck: Bleſſed are all whom God ſhall move with Compaſſion to ranſom ſo Illuſtrious a Captive, and reſtore her liberty to diſcharge ſo great a Duty.*

It is ( I humbly conceive ) moſt neceſſary Poſterity ſhould know, what a diſmal Cloud hung over *Grocers* Hall, whilſt it lay in Ruines, after the late dreadful Conflagration in the year 1666. And (as a Corps arreſted when the Soul is departed ) under Sequeſtrations at the Suit of their Creditors, which rendred this Company moſt reproachful in the ſight of all, who were ignorant of the Truth their Caſe, till at length they became a By-word: Inſomuch, that it not only diſcouraged thoſe, who had ſerved their Times to Members of this Company, to take their Freedoms, but alſo Apprentices to be Bound at our Hall; And conſequently in a few years, the old Members every year falling, and ſo few planted in their room, the *Grocers* muſt in all likelyhood have ſunk for want of Succeſſion, had not you ( as ſo many worthy Patriots ) of your liberal Benevolence ( as the beſt means to prevent it ) carry'd on and ſo compleated this ſtately Fabrick ( ſo long before begun by that Worthy Member Sir *John Cutler*, our preſent Maſter ) that it is now become the moſt Commodious Seat ( ſo naturally Scituate ) of the Chief Magiſtrate, that ever was before in this City.

And which (well weighed) is not only the Honor, and Ornament, but the beſt Branch of the Companies Revenue, being a clear Augmentation, and Addition to it, and the beſt Foundation could be laid for their Deliverance. Thus far (in the beſt manner I can) in diſcharge of my Duty, I aſſume to hand down Truth to poſterity, as your Faithful Servant, and Secretary; and as the firſt part of my Duty, in order to vindicate the Company, and ſatisfie their Creditors, ſo as to avoid any more vexatious and chargeable Suits, as well as daily Clamors, to diſturb the Governing Members, in attending the Companies Service; I have ſome time ſince Compoſed and Printed (in the following Sheets,) ſo much of the Companies Caſe, as I deemed fit to be made Publick: So I have (in farther purſuit of my Duty) now at laſt Compleated the other part, which I may call the bleeding Caſe in their preſent Condition, (and a fit Object only for good *Samaritanes*) as it relates to their Revenue, and the Charities, wherewith they are chargeable, as well where they have Funds, as where they have none, and the Arrears of each kind, together with their Debts, how much they owed in the year 1666, how much thereof they have ſince paid, and how much remains; with humble Propoſals, what is moſt important in the firſt place, and what further to be gradually done by them; ſo as to encourage Benefactors, (whoſe hearts God Almighty ſhall incline to contribute) towards diſcharge of our Debts, and Arrears of Charities. All which I humbly ſubmit to the conſideration of the Governing Members; Praying acceptance of my ſincere Endeavours, Pardon of my Frailties, and Infirmities, and Continuance of your Favours, and Countenance, towards,

*Your moſt Faithfull,*

*And moſt humble Servant,*

W. Ravenhill, *Clerk of the Company.*

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*To*

## *To the Highly Honoured Sir* John Moore, *Knight, and Alderman, Citizen, and* Grocer *of* London.

*Sir,*

I cannot be reconciled to my ſelf, till I have made known both to the preſent, and commended to the ſucceeding Generations of the *Grocers*, how much they ſtand engaged to you in particular, for the rebuilding, enlarging, and beautifying their Hall, and all the conſequent Advantages of it. You may pleaſe to call to mind, in what manner I addreſſed my ſelf to you, about the Month of *February* 1680. with a Paper in my hand (which I doubt not but you have ſtill by you) wherein I moſt humbly begged leave to lay before you, the moſt deplorable condition of the Company, their Hall then lying in Ruines, and under Sequeſtration, which had wholly diſcouraged all Freemen and Apprentices, ſo as they muſt in a few years in all probability have ſunk for want of a Succeſſion, which rendred the Company a Reproach and By-word to all People. I thereby humbly propoſed the repairing and beautifying the Hall (ſo long before begun by Sir *John Cutler*) as the moſt likely means to remove the one, and prevent the other; with Motives therein humbly offered to encourage you thereunto; not doubting but if you began, other worthy Members would ſoon follow, to make it a commodious Seat for the chief Magiſtrate. And I muſt bear you Record, how affectionately you received me, and I could not but conceive by your Countenance, how welcome the Propoſal of ſo good a work was to you; which you ſoon after demonſtrated, by appearing in the Court of Aſſiſtants (Sir *James Edwards* then Maſter being preſent) and freely offered to repair and beautifie the Body of the great Hall, at your own proper charge, Sir *James Edwards* and other worthy Members then preſent, likewiſe declaring you ſhould not want Company in ſo good a work. And the ſucceſs it met withal ſpeaks it ſelf; for Sir *Thomas Foot*, Sir *John Frederick*, Sir *Henry Tulſe*, Sir *Benjamin Newland*, and other worthy Members, ſoon joyned their Aſſiſtance, and gave encouragement to finiſh the whole work, and what Progreſs hath ſince been made, both for improving and preſerving what was left of this Society, and Augmentation and Enlargement of their Rights and Priviledges, to preſerve a Succeſſion for Encouragement of Benefactors, to diſcharge their Debts and Charities. The great encouragement and countenance I have received from you, in my ſincere endeavours, faithfully to diſcharge my duty in my place, as it hath moved me to do both the Company and you Juſtice, in recording this great Truth, ſo it ſhall for ever oblige me to acknowledge my ſelf

*SIR,*

*Your moſt Humble,*

*And Faithful Servant,*

W. Ravenhill, *Clerk.*

*To*

*To the most Worthily deserving and Highly esteemed Citizen,* John Jeffreys *Esq; my most Honoured Master and true Friend.*

*Sir,*

THough the manifold Favours I have received from you, have obliged me to a lasting Gratitude, and though I am conscious to my self, it is no way pleasing to you to hear of any kindness you have shewed to me or others, yet I cannot acquit my self in the Relation I stand engaged, for the opportunity I have had (chiefly by your Interest) to compleat my Service began for the Company of *Grocers*, and the Hopes I have of reaping the fruits of my own Industry therein, until I have given some Demonstration, that your kindness was not bestowed on me in vain: I am very well satisfied, all other returns would find cold Entertainment with you. And one thing most remarkable I cannot but humbly take notice of, God having in Mercy bestowed on us, three worthy Benefactors, and one more illustrious Patron, under whose Conduct our late Charter passed, of one * Name, I have therefore made bold thus to fix an humble Address to you all in order. May the Trinity in Unity unite your Affections, as one indulgent Patron to the *Grocers*, and repleniſh your Souls an hundred fold, for the good you have done, and shall do for this great Monument of Charity, whose Foundation was laid in purer times by so many pious Benefactors; but now (most unhappily) in this Iron age, so languishing under her many and various past Sufferings, and present Wants, that she is (in the Eye of the World) become an adequate Object of the most extensive Charity, an Ocean capable to receive all your Bounty, for which the Childrens Children, in the Generations to come, shall call you Blessed.

* John *from the Originall rendred* Domini gratia, *The Favour of God.*

Sir, I am very well satisfied, that your appearing so cordially my Friend, was alone to encourage me to be diligent and Faithful in the Companies Service. And therefore I most humbly beg leave to prefix this my humble Address to you, before the following Sheets, as the best Testimony I am able to give at present of my sincere Endeavours therein, resolving (by Gods assistance) to pursue my Duty, and think my self happy, whilst I may in so doing be by you esteemed, as

*SIR,*

*Your most Obliged, Faithful,*

*And most Humble Servant,*

W. Ravenhill, *Clerk of the Company of* Grocers.

*To*

## *To the moſt Worthily deſerving all Honour and Eſteem of good Men,* Edward Pickering *Eſq;*.

*Sir,*

WE find in Sacred Writ the good *Samaritan* commended by Truth it ſelf, before the Prieſt and Levite, for that he (though he were a Stranger, yet) had more Compaſſion then they themſelves of their own Countryman in diſtreſs. I ſhould be guilty of horrid Ingratitude, if I did not take notice in this place, how you followed that good Example, as you paſſed by our Poor Alms-men at *Owndle*, and (though were no Member of our Company) fed and cloathed thoſe Poor diſtreſſed Objects, in the pinching cold Weather, whoſe ſuffering condition at that time, was not repreſented at ſo great a diſtance to our worthy Members here, who have not been wanting in their Care and Endeavours, to make a certain Settlement for relief of them, and all their other numerous Charities, as far as their Revenue will extend to; (having been ſo exceedingly waſted by the late dreadfull Fire, and other Calamities that have attended them) ſo as they may anſwer the Pious Intent of their Donors. When I acquainted our Court of Aſſiſtants with your former kindneſs to thoſe poor Men, and your Godlike Expreſſions what you intended for the future, it gave wonderful Encouragement to them to purſue the good work in hand. Nor indeed could they have a greater Motive (if well weighed in all its circumſtances;) for nothing can be properly called Charity, but an unmercinary doing good for goodneſs ſake alone. We find our Modern Separatiſts are generally kind to their own Herd (which they Phariſaically baptize the Houſhold of Faith:) But a Good man, like the Sun, gives out his rays to all Objects of Miſery, of what Perſwaſion or Country ſoever; and the very aſpect of Humanity, is ſufficient to commend them to his Charity: And to ſuch Faithful Stewards alone, will the Lord Treaſurer of All, at the great Audit, proclaim that laſt Eulogy of, Well done Good and Faithful Servants, who have thus diſpoſed of that part of their Lords Eſtate committed to their Truſt, according to his own will. Our Company was once the Corban of Charities, and though our Stock hath been waſted by thoſe Calamities, that have befallen us, yet here is a Bleſſed opportunity of doing good for ſuch to whom God hath lent much to improve, and he alone who holds their Hearts in his hands, can inſpire them with a willing mind, to ſow plentifully here, that they may reap of the fruits hereafter, when they give account of their Talents. And ſurely happy are they that truſt God Almighty on his own Word, who hath been ſo gracious, as to invite them by ſuch opportunities, but to lend him his own, and to promiſe both a four-fold Return of Principal, when he takes account of their Stewardſhip; and in the mean time to pay them Intereſt for Forbearance, by making their Beds in their Sickneſs, and delivering them in time of Trouble, when Riches cannot relieve them. As God hath inclined your Heart to become one of our Benefactors, I hold my ſelf in duty obliged to fix this plain Epiſtle to you, before the following Sheets, entreating you to eſteem of me, as

*SIR,*

*Your moſt Faithful,*

*And moſt Humble Servant,*

W. Ravenhill, *Clerk of the Company of* Grocers.

*To the Right* HONOURABLE, *Right* WORSHIPFUL, *and the reſt of the Worthy* MEMBERS *of the* SOCIETY *of the* MISTERY *of* GROCERY, LONDON.

William Ravenhill, *their Clerk, humbly offers and prays their Acceptance and Peruſal of theſe following Papers;*

*As a Teſtimony of his Hearty Deſires, and Sincere Endeavours to vindicate the Reputation, and improve the Intereſt of this Society.*

AS ſoon as by the good Providence of God I obtained the Favour, and had the Happineſs to be choſen your Clerk, I reſolved with my utmoſt Diligence, to purſue and perform my Duty in this place, and thereby gratefully anſwer the expectation of my Friends, who promoted my Election; and alſo lay hold of ſo fair an opportunity, to ingratiate my ſelf into the Favour and Eſteem of Good Men: Being convinced, that if I ſhould neglect my Duty, it would render my Follies and Ingratitude more conſpicuous to the World. Therefore that I might in doing the one avoid the other, I endeavoured in the firſt place, to inform my ſelf of the true State and Condition of the Company; upon Inqueſt whereof, I found it plain and manifeſt, That for want of Knowledge of the Truth thereof, not only many Worthy Benefactors with-held their Aſſiſtance, towards diſcharge of their Debts and Charities; But alſo many Reproaches and Reflections were caſt upon this Society, both from Strangers (with whom they have been no way concerned) and alſo their Creditors who rendred them obnoxious in Courts of Law and Equity, and before the Commiſſioners for Charitable uſes; as if they had been a Company that poſſeſſed a great Revenue, ſufficient to pay all their Debts, yet were ſo averſe from doing that, that they waſted and conſumed their Eſtate in Feaſting themſelves, refuſing to pay, unleſs they were Compelled by Chargeable Suits; which not only aggravated their Creditors, but alienated the Affections of many good Perſons, as well Members as others; and cauſed many chargeable Suits and vexatious Proſecutions againſt them, notwithſtanding the great Care and Endeavours of ſome Worthy and Good Members, who uſed all poſſible means to avoid the ſame. For I cannot deny, but that ſo long as I was ignorant of the Truth of their Caſe (though I was an unworthy Member,) yet I was perſwaded to believe many things reported of the *Grocers*, which afterwards I found to be far otherwiſe. Therefore I made it my great deſign to acquaint my ſelf with all their Affairs, and paſt Tranſactions, that I might be able to make a true Repreſentation of the Companies Condition, as to all Subſtantial matters: Both what it was before they contracted their Debts, and how they became indebted; what they have already done towards it, and what means and methods they may beſt uſe, and proſecute to diſcharge themſelves; to the end thoſe great Reproaches and Prejudices (which through Miſ-apprehenſions and falſe Reports have been caſt on this Company) may be removed. And every true-hearted Member that bears a Chriſtian reſpect to the Pious Memory of our Anceſtors (who were Worthy Benefactors) and would in diſcharge of his Duty commend himſelf, after their Example, to Poſterity, may willingly and cheerfully lay to his helping hand. And as a further Teſtimony of my hearty deſires to ſerve the Members, having ſo briefly

ſtated

ſtated the Companies Caſe, I ſhall endeavour to give you a ſhort account of the Antiquity and firſt Creation and Continuance of the *Grocers*, as far and clear as I can make Conjecture, or have received any probable Account. Alſo I have regulated and digeſted the Companies Books into an orderly Method, as alſo their Evidences to clear their Titles to their ſeveral Rents, Lands and Houſes, and the ſeveral Schools under their Government: And alſo the ſeveral Eccleſiaſtical Livings in the diſpoſition of this Society, with the names of their Founders, and how they became Veſted in their Right: And alſo other Priviledges peculiar to this Society; ſo as it may appear obvious and plain to be underſtood by every individual Member, of which it will not be proper here to give an account; but I refer to the Books and Records themſelves, more fit to be inſpected at this Hall, by ſuch as have Right to know them, than to be expoſed to view of others whom it no way concerns.

To which I have added ſome ſhort account of the Charter and Confirmation with Enlargement of Priviledges, granted them by his late Majeſty, King *Charles* the Second, of bleſſed Memory, upon their Petition and Surrender after the *Quo Warranto* brought againſt them. And their By-Laws and Ordinances made thereupon, for well governing and ordering their Members and Myſtery.

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*The*

# THE COMPANIES CASE

## Briefly ſtated in this firſt Leaf.

MOST part of the ſaid Companies Revenues is charged with yearly Charities to ſeveral Pariſhes, Places, and Uſes, amounting to near the yearly Profits they receive. Moſt part whereof conſiſted of Houſes in London, which were all conſumed by the late dreadful Fire, when they expected to have advanced great Sums of Money by way of Fine, on Renewing of Leaſes towards Payment of their Debts.

They had alſo heretofore many and great Sums of Money paid into their hands, as a Fund for the Uſes following, (viz.)

To pay yearly Sums in Coals, Faggots and Money, to ſeveral Pariſhes and Wards about London, and elſewhere.

To ſeveral Priſons for Redemption and Releaſe of Priſoners.

To the Poor Members of the Company.

To be lent to Young Men that had ſerved their Times to Members of this Company on Security, with little or no Intereſt, to ſet up, and to be returned again.

To buy Impropriations for maintenance of Miniſters, where Livings are ſmall. And

To maintain ſeveral Schools and Alms-Houſes.

They complyed punctually with all their Truſts, continuing in very great Credit and Reputation, until the ſad effects of War and Fire rendred them uncapable to diſcharge their yearly Charities, where they have no Fund left. And

The remaining part of their great Debts which they contracted, as followeth, viz.

Anno 1640. To accommodate the late King in his Exigences, on Security of ſome of his Peers.-4500 l.

Anno 1642. To Subdue the Rebellion in Ireland, and Relieve his late Majeſties (the Royal Martyrs) Subjects there in diſtreſs.——————————————9000 l.

Anno 1643. They were compelled to lend the City, for which they had their common Seal.-——4500 l.

All which they took up on the Companies Seal, nor were Singular therein, but neceſſitated thereto in Complyance with all other Companies, and indeed with the whole City.

Upon their taking up this Money they made a By-Law to levy the ſame on themſelves, if their Stock fell ſhort; and ſo they continued payment of their Intereſt. And as one Creditor called for his Money in, they took up of others, and paid them off; Depending upon getting in their ſaid Principal. All which failed them, till at laſt their ſole hope was of advancing Money by Renewing of Leaſes. Many whereof were nigh expired. But the Fire in 1666 conſumed their whole Revenue in London; They having already payd for Intereſt of Money between 1640, and 1666.——————30000 l.

As their Debts exceeded any other Companies, ſo their loſs herein was exceeding great, ſo that now they were uncapable any longer to pay Debts or Charities.

They applied themſelves to the Parliament then ſitting on their By-Law; But were rejected, as binding to no more than were Parties to it, moſt of whom were dead.

They had then no means to raiſe Money, but by letting their Ground to Builders for Fines on Long Leaſes, great part whereof they were compelled to, by decree of the Judges at Cliffords-Inn.

And by voluntary Subſcriptions, both which were ſet on foot ſoon after the Fire: And to encourage Subſcriptions, Sir John Cutler Erected the firſt Building in the Garden.

They raiſed Conſiderable Sums, and propounded to pay their Creditors their Principal, part thereof down, and the reſt at two Payments.

And after many Meetings, moſt of their Creditors inclined to accept of ſuch Propoſals, finding how it muſt be advanced. But ſome of their Members being backward, and ſome Creditors ill adviſed, Sued the Company, and Seized their Hall in Ruines, which put a ſtop to all; though thoſe Creditors themſelves repent this; Afterwards looſing their Charges, and glad to comply on lower terms than at firſt offered.

Afterwards the Company raiſe Money what they could of kind Members themſelves, and take up the reſidue on the Aſſignment of the Sequeſtration and Conveyance of all their Eſtate to pay off the Creditors that Sequeſtred. And ſome other remaining proportions to Creditors, who had not yet received any. And to ſupply what was wanting, they let their Land in Ireland, on Fine, ſinking their Rent to 10 l. per Annum. But the Hall continuing in Ruines, the Company was thereby rendred Reproachful.

The Apprentices bound at other Halls, and turned over.

The Freemen take their Freedoms of other Companies.

And all Benefactors decline as deſpairing of any good to Poſterity.

*So that the Members every year dying and failing, and many removing into the Country, and none to ſucceed in their Places:*

*It muſt needs follow, that the Company in few years muſt diſſolve for want of a Succeſſion of Members.*

*Which would moſt reproachfully have rendred the Members then living, who were numerous and equal, if not more eminent than any other Company, not only moſt ungrateful to their Predeceſſors, who have been ſo liberal Benefactors, and have left ſuch Grounds (though the Buildings were ſo conſumed by Fire) yet now built on, gives a great hope to Poſterity, but alſo obnoxious to Poſterity.*

*The Conſideration whereof alone, moved* Sir John Moore, *another Worthy Member then next in courſe to Succeed in the Chair, to repair the Body of the Hall, and alſo Sir* James Edwards, *Sir* Henry Tulſe, *Sir* Benjamin Newland, *and other kind Members, to enlarge it with Commodious Buildings for the Seat of a chief Magiſtrate. That it might not only encourage the Freemen, Apprentices and Benefactors to preſerve the Company a Nurſery of Charity, and Seminary of good Citizens: But alſo anſwer the Charge of the Building, in improving the yearly Revenue of the Company: And is indeed (if rightly conſidered) in the Companies preſent Circumſtances, of greater advantage to the Company, than any one thing that hath been done for them. For*

*I. It hath much incouraged the Apprentices and Freemen, ſo that whereas there uſed to be bound, 1, 2, or 3 Apprentices in a Month, and 1, or 2 made free before, and thoſe but poor Artificers; they encreaſed afterwards to a far greater Number, as well of Freemen, as Apprentices; and many of them of good Quality.*

*II. It hath given great ſatisfaction to ſeveral Eminent Members, who have declared themſelves very inclinable, to Contribute largely towards diſcharge of the Companies Debts and Charities, if they ſee but any Encouragement from the reſt of the Members.*

*III. This Building though it amounts to much more than what it was at firſt deſigned, Yet a great part thereof hath been freely laid down on purpoſe for this work. And whatever is further laid down towards it, (which it is hoped the whole will be raiſed by kind Members to anſwer theſe good ends) would never have been ſo given, but for this very purpoſe.*

*So that in all probability, the Hall (if the Company pleaſe) may be every year diſpoſed of for* 200. l. per Annum *at the leaſt (which being no way clogged, as the reſt is, with Charities) Is more than two-fold better than all the Companies Revenue they now receive beſides.*

*And that the Building and Beautifying the Hall, may not be a bait to Creditors again to ſeize it; So again to diſcourage the Members:*

*The Hall, and all the Companies Revenue is by advice of Council ſettled by Conveyance and Decree.*

*I. Subject to ſecure the Money ſo taken up to diſcharge the Sequeſtrations, &c. And when thoſe and what Moneys they ſhould be ſo neceſſitated to take up to compleat the Buildings, ſhall be diſcharged.*

*II. Then to ſecure the yearly Charities wherewith the Company is Chargeable, by many Benefactors who ſo heretofore left Money in their Hands, as a Fund to ſecure the ſame. No part whereof now remains; As being a truſt they are liable in the firſt place, as a Duty incumbent on them, both to avoid a Curſe, and in order to obtain a Bleſſing from God upon their Endeavours: As alſo to avoid proſecution of the Commiſſioners, upon the Statute for Charitable Uſes, who have yearly put the Company to vaſt expences already upon that Account.*

*And theſe things having been made known to their Creditors, who were alſo convinced (by the ill-Succeſs of others) how vain and fruitleſs it would be to put themſelves and the Company to trouble and charge, whereby they might hazard the loſs of their Debts, but not in the leaſt better ſecure them; The Company have been not only free from Suits and Proſecutions, which they were not at any time before (ſince their troubles began) but alſo the Wardens and Aſſiſtants have been (in a great meaſure) freed from thoſe daily Clamours, which diſturbed them in the Companies Service.*

*And now ſo fair an Opportunity being offered to deliver the Company, and to give Encouragement to Benefactors; It is hoped there is no Member but will chearfully embrace it, whereby they ſhall not only draw others on, by their Example, to preſerve this Society, ſtill a Nurſery of Charity, and Seminary of good Citizens; But alſo encourage Benefactors for the future; ſome in their Lives, and others at their Death, liberally to extend their Kindneſs towards this Company: And without all doubt, ſuch works as theſe are acceptable to God in times of greateſt Trouble and Danger. And ſuch Benefactors may hope (on no leſs Security than God's own Word) for Eaſe and Comfort on a Sick Bed, and Deliverance in time of Trouble.*

*And moreover their Creditors (being now made ſenſible of the Truth of the Companies Condition) are inclined to comply with any reaſonable Propoſals ſhall be made by any on the Companies behalf, and (as ſome have already done) others are willing, and ready to Embrace ſuch Terms, as may be agreeable to the Companies Condition in their preſent Circumſtances, for their Satisfaction.*

I have thus abſtracted the Companies Caſe in theſe 2 Pages: To the end all Perſons concerned (whether Members, Creditors, or Benefactors) whoſe time will not permit them to read the following Sheets, may be the more readily informed upon all Occaſions of the Truth of their Condition: And for their eaſe, who ſhall deſire further Satisfaction in any particular, I have added marginal Notes in the following Pages for their Direction.

*A ſhort*

# *A ſhort Account of the Original of the* GROCERS, *and their firſt Incorporation: And their Condition in their preſent Circumſtances, truly Repreſented.*

*Grocers (*inquit* Minſhew) *ab initio ut ex legibus noſtris probat, nihil minut im ſed omnia al* groſſo, by the great, *Magnis ſc. ponderibus divendere ſolits ſunt In libro ſtatutorum noſtrorum ſignificat Mercatores, Qui aliquod mercium genus totum coemunt.* Skin. Etymologicon linguæ Anglicanæ.

*THE word *Grocers* was a term at firſt diſtinguiſhing Merchants of this Society in oppoſition to Inferior Retailers; for that they uſually ſold in groſs Quantities by great Weights. And in ſome of our old Books, the Word ſignifies Merchants, that in their Merchandizing dealt for the Whole of any kind: But in after times the word *Grocery* became ſo extenſive, that it can now hardly be reſtrained to the certain kinds of Merchandizes, they have formerly dealt in. For they have been the moſt Univerſal Merchants that traded abroad, and what they brought home, many Artiſts of this Society found out ways afterwards to Change and alter the Species by Mixture, Confections, and Compoſitions of ſimple Ingredients: By which means many and various ways of dealing and trading paſſed under the Denomination of *Groceries*. And indeed this City and Nation do in a great meaſure owe the Improvement of Navigation to theſe Merchants, originally excerciſing this Miſtery, as trading into all foreign parts, from whence we have received either Spices, Druggs, Fruits, Gums, or other rich Aromatick Commodities. It is well known, this Company hath bred the moſt Eminent Merchants in this City, and this Society hath been ſo prolifick, that many other Societies have been branched out from hence, as will be owned by the moſt worthy of them. The Merchants Trading to the *Levant* Seas, and other Societies have originally been the Off-ſpring of this Society, as appears by ancient Records of Indentures of Apprentices to Members of this Company. And it is not inconſiſtent, and may be within compaſs of Belief, That there was amongſt the *Romans* a Society agreeable to this of the *Grocers*, who were alſo Merchants trading into thoſe Seas, as may be Collected from *Perſius*, a Poet who wrote in *Rome* in the time of *Auguſtus*, deſcribing the various Inclinations of men in their Courſe of Life. He inſtances them in theſe words, (*viz.*)

*Etymology of the Word* Grocer.

*Which after became more Extenſive.*

*They were the firſt Merchants trading abroad, and ſo prolifick, that other Companies have branched from them.*

*Improved Navigation.*

*Their Antiquity.*

*Mercibus hic* Italis *mutat ſub ſole recenti*
*Rugoſum piper, & pallentis Grana Cymini*: Sat. 5.

*With Merchandizing this with Care doth run*
*Unto the Eaſt under the riſing Sun*
*To fetch rough Pepper and pale Cummin Seeds*
*For* Roman *Wares*, &c.

Where Pepper, being the moſt Royal and preſervative Spice, is only mentioned by way of Eminency for all the reſt. And ſo we may well conclude, that this was the Reaſon why the Society of the *Grocers* (whoſe Original firſt here excerciſed, may modeſtly be ſuppoſed to ſpring from the *Romans*) were long before they were Incorporated, diſtinguiſhed by the name of *Pepperers*, although they traded before in all other the former Merchandizes, as well as that. It is impoſſible to give any other Account of the Original of this Society, here in this City ſo long at firſt exerciſed under the Denomination of *Pepperers*; For that, the City of *London* it ſelf, at firſt under the *Britains*, and ſucceſſively after under the *Romans* and *Saxons*, and at laſt was over-run by the *Danes*. No Hiſtory now remains to give a certain Account of the firſt Methods of Government therein, further than what may be collected from ſome late Writers of our own now extant, who have tranſmitted to us, what they could then diſcover by their Enquiry

*Firſt called Pepperers by way of Eminency for all Spices, as were ſuch like Merchants trading in Rome.*

Enquiry and Search into Antiquity; whereby we may plainly understand that the first Model of Civil Government setled in this City, was from the Examplar of *Rome* it self, as Mr. *Stow* instances in the very words of an ancient Writer, who wrote in the Reign of King *Stephen*, (viz.) *This City* (saith he, *even as* Rome) *is divided into Wards, it hath yearly Sheriffs instead of Consuls, it hath the Dignity of Senators, it hath Under-Officers, and according to the Qualities of Laws it hath several Courts and general Assemblies upon appointed days.* Some time after the City obtained their Chief Magistrate to be under the Denomination of Mayor, which was about the first year of King *Richard* the First. The first Man we find advanced to that Dignity was *Henry Fitz-Alwin*, who continued therein 24 years successively: And soon after (to wit) in the 17th. year of King *Henry* the Third, it appears *Andrew Bockerell* a Pepperer was chosen Mayor; and so eminent were the Pepperers in this Infancy of the Mayoralty, that before the 36 year of that Kings Reign, a Pepperer had the Chair 9 several years, and very frequently afterwards we find the Pepperers advanced to that Dignity. And it appears by ancient Books (now extant) That in the time of King *Henry* the Fourth, there were at one time no less then 12 of their Members Aldermen, of which Number were two Brothers *William Chichely* (afterwards Sheriff) Sir *Robert Chicheley* afterwards also Sheriff, and twice Lord Mayor, who also was Founder of the Parish Church of St. *Stephens Walbrook*; upon a plot of ground by him for that Sacred use purchased, of the *Grocers*, the Donation of which Church is at this Day in the Company of *Grocers*. Which Society of the Pepperers, encreasing and spreading so Universal in Merchandizing, that it appears they were distinguished as well by the name of *Grocers* (being a more comprehensive name) as Pepperers. Insomuch that before they were incorporated by the Name of *Grocers* (to wit) in the 3d. year of King *Edward* the 3d, *Anno* 1329. *John Grantham* was chosen and held Mayor by the Title of *Grocer*. And the first Charter I find of the Corporation of the *Grocers*, was granted by King *Edward* the 3d, in the 20th. year of his Reign, *Anno Dom.* 1345, which appears to be long before the *Mercers* were incorporated; though they are now the only Company have Precedency of the *Grocers*: Yet for the Reasons above-mentioned, it may be very well presumed, that as the *Grocers* were long before them the most Eminent Society, so in after-times renewing their Charter by a more Comprehensive Term, they might Post-pone themselves.

*From whence London had its first Model of Civil Government.*

*First Lord Mayor in* London.

*Their first Member Mayor,* Andrew Bockerell.

*Pepperers Eminent and frequent Mayors.*

*Twelve Aldermen at once Members.*

*Sir* Robert Chicheley *twice Lord Mayor, and Founder of* Walbrooke *Church.*

*Still in their Donation.*

*Afterwards called* Grocers.

*First Charter of the* Grocers, *and before the* Mercers.

*Afterwards Postponed to them.*

But though they thus March as a forlorn Regiment in the Front, (might the hopes and endeavours of many good Members prevail to have the Spirit of our Ancestors revived in the present Generation) this could no way Eclipse the *Grocers*, who have all the Noble Army of the rest of the Corporations following them, than the Morning Star ushering in Day before it, can Eclipse the Glory of the Rising Sun.

*But not to Diminution of their Dignity.*

Afterwards the Charter of this Company was several times renewed, as also it was in the 7th. year of King *Henry* the 6th. and they then made a Body Politick, by the name of *Custodes & Communitas Mysterij* Groceriæ Londini; *The Wardens and Commonalty of the Mystery of the* Grocery *of* London. And in the beginning of that Kings Reign they purchased the ground where the *Grocers* Hall now stands, with the ground belonging to it, of *Walter* Lord *Fitz-water*, a Noble Peer of this Realm, bounding the same between the *Old-Jury* and *Walbrook*. And so considerable in the City were the *Grocers* long before that time, that they may be well presumed (time out of mind) to have had the management of the King's-Beam, as an Office peculiar to them; not only as principally using the same, but as being originally vested therein; they having had all along (beyond the Memory of Man) the naming of the Weigh-master, and the naming, placing, removing and governing of the four Porters, attending that Office; all to be Elected out of their own Company, and to be Sworn at their own Hall: A priviledge allowed them, as their undoubted and inseperate Right, as ancient as that Office it self used in the City, and now at this day, upon Settlement and Improvement thereof, may become of much more advantage to the Members of this Company.

*Grocers Incorporate.*

*Purchase of the Hall, of the Lord* Fitz-water, *then late his Mansion-House.*

*The Office of the Kings Beam.*

Also amongst other Priviledges and ancient Usages of this Company, I find recorded, even as high as *Edward* the 4th's days, this Company had Power of Inspection and Correction of Abuses and Irregularities of all Persons (though free of this or any other Company) in the City or Suburbs, any way using or exercising any kind of *Grocery*; and also to assay the Weights they bought or sold

*Their ancient Priviledges of Inspection and Correction of Abuses in their Mystery.*

ſold by: And to take notice of all their Defaults, and return them to be Fined at the Diſcretion of this Fellowſhip, and to take 4 *d*, of every perſon for their Labour therein, as well of ſuch as were offending, as ſuch as were not. Which Uſage was always continued, and in the Charter renewed to this Company in the 15th. year of the late King *Charles* the firſt; this Priviledge is Confirmed and expreſſed to extend three miles from the City, as well within Liberties as without, and hath only been omitted for ſome years paſt, when the Company began to be firſt interrupted in their Affairs.

*Confirmed and Expreſſed to extend 3 Miles from the Liberties.*

The ſame King *Henry* the 6th. by Charter under the Great Seal, granted to this Company the Office of Garbling in all places throughout the Kingdom of *England*, (the City of *London* only excepted:) Which priviledge (though diſcontinued during the late unnatural War, and almoſt forgotten) is now ratified by their late Charter and Confirmation, and may be of conſiderable Advantage to this Company.

*Garbling Office.*

In the time of the Reign of King *Henry* the 7th. the Company were greatly indebted, and Sir *Henry Keble* a Worthy Member (ſometimes Lord Mayor of this City) lent them Mony on their Hall and their Revenue (nigh the full value) to clear their Debts, and afterwards in the beginning of the Reign of King *Henry* the 8th. by his laſt Will and Teſtament, freely gave back all to the Company, remitting his whole Debt and Intereſt. This Sir *Henry Keble* at his own charge built *Aldermary* Church. Afterwards about the 18th. year of the ſame King *Henry* the 8th. Sir *William Laxton* alſo a Worthy Member, (and ſometime Lord Mayor) by Deed executed in his Life time, gave the Company, all their Lands and Houſes in *Canningſtreet*, and the Lanes thereunto adjoyning.

Sir Henry Keble *Sir* William Laxton, *Worthy Members and Benefactors, both buried in a Vault, in* Aldermary *Church. See* Stowes *Surrey.*

I ſhall here add but one more (who may well deſerve to be recorded among our chief Benefactors) Mr. *John Bilſdon* a worthy Member, by his Will dated about the 14th. of King *Henry* the 8th. gave this Company, all his Meſſuages in the ſeveral Pariſhes of St. *Michaels*, and St. *Peters* in *Cornhill*, which being Conſumed (with the reſt of their Revenue in *London*) by the late dreadful Fire, many very fair Houſes have been ſince built on the ſame ground, by the Companies Leaſees, on long Leaſes, under ſmall Rents, but of great improvement when expired.

John Billdon *a Worthy Benefactor of Houſes in* Cornhill.

Upon part of which ground, ſtood the late Weigh-houſe, where the Office of the Kings Beam was kept, until the time of the ſame Fire.

*Weigh-Houſe.*

And in order to prevent any difference, which might otherwiſe hereafter happen, between the City and Company, touching the intereſt of the City in Weigh-houſe-yard; I humbly conceive it to be my duty herein to inſert (in the beſt manner I can) the Truth of the Caſe, eſpecially for that upon ſearch I could find no certain footſteps of it in their own Books at *Guild-Hall*, which occaſioned ſome difficulty in ſettling the draught of the Leaſe (hereafter mentioned) from the Company to the City: The City claiming Intereſt in the ſoyl of the Weigh-houſe-yard, upon ſome ſurmiſe that they had more ground there (than what they claimed under the Companies Title) belonging to them, until I had made the contrary appear (both by Evidence, and Certificate of the ancient Inhabitants there:) As alſo, that as well, all the ground ſo demiſed by the Company to the City, as alſo whereon the Houſes on all parts of the Weigh-houſe-yard are built (being bounded on the North with the ground of the *Merchant-Taylor*'s, and fronting the High Street of *Cornhill*) is part of that ground ſo deviſed by Mr. *John Bilſdon* to the Company of *Grocers*.

So as all the Intereſt the City hath there, appears to be thus, *viz.* The *Grocers* having (as above is mentioned) the management of the Office of the Kings Beam, did formerly accommodate the City with a Weigh-houſe there, convenient for executing the ſame Office, (as appears to be before at Will) under ſome reſerved Rent, for that the whole duty ariſing thereby (the Weigh-Maſter and Porters wages deducted) belonged to the City, until the year 1625. ſome difference happening between the then Lord Mayor and the Company, touching the Nomination of one to ſucceed the Weigh-Maſter, then lately Dead; a Committee of Aldermen was appointed for the City, and a Committee of *Grocers* for the Company, who determined the ſame; and the Company purſuant to that Agreement, were to grant the City a Leaſe of their Weigh-houſe, being one great lower room, for 99 years, under the Rent of 10 *l. per annum*, which the City accordingly had and enjoyed.

*How the City have Intereſt in the Meſſuage in Weigh-Houſe-Yard.*

And the Company afterwards granting a Leaſe to one *Lyonell Newman*, of a ſmall Ware-houſe at one end of the ſame Weigh-Houſe, and of all the Rooms

as well over the Weigh-houſe, as over the ſame Ware-houſe, for a long term, at 40 *s. per annum*, the City afterwards purchaſed the ſaid *Lyonell Newman's* Intereſt. And the whole being ſo conſumed by the Fire; upon application of the City to the Judges at *Cliffords*-Inn, and on hearing the City and Company, they decreed the Company (for encouragement of the City to build) ſhould grant the City a Leaſe of the whole, with additional years, under the entire Rent of 12 *l. per Annum*, which is drawn and prepared accordingly; being one Meſſuage erected by the City, on the ground, whereon the Weigh-Houſe and Ware-Houſe ſtood, and now in the occupation of Mr. *Williams* the Leaſſee of the City.

*The Judges decree a Leaſe to the City of it.*

The other branches of the Companies Revenue, together with the ſeveral Charities and uſes wherewith as well, Sir *Henry Keble*, Sir *William Laxton*, and Mr. *Bilſdons*, as alſo every other branch thereof are charged, as alſo the ſeveral Schools, and Eccleſiaſtical Promotions, in the Companies diſpoſition, and under their Government and Inſpection, I have digeſted into an orderly Method (as moſt proper there to be ſeen) in Books for that purpoſe provided at the Hall.

*The other part of the Companies Revenue and the ſeveral Charities and Uſes, wherewith the whole and every branch are charged: As alſo the Schools and Eccleſiaſtical Promotions in their gifts digeſted in Books at the Hall.*

Thus this Company long flouriſhed both before and after that time, with many Eminent and Worthy Members, who became very liberal Benefactors, and had ſo great a ſhare all along in the Senators of this famous City, that they never wanted an Alderman of their Members yearly to ſucceed Maſter-Warden of this Company; and ſo faithfully did they acquit themſelves of thoſe Charities they were intruſted withal, that it gave them the greateſt Reputation of any Company in *London*: Inſomuch that many well-diſpoſed Perſons did covet to make this Corporation as it were the *Corban* of their Charities, which in proceſs of time became their Snare, as in this Diſcourſe will immediately appear: Wherein I ſhall endeavour by giving a true account of the Nature of thoſe Charities, to remove the reproach that hath been caſt on this Company, as if they had miſ-employed them; and make it plainly appear, that the Company of *Grocers* have in the Judgment of every impartial man (who ſhall well weigh their Circumſtances from the firſt to the laſt) acquitted themſelves in all the Truſt and Affairs of this Company, as becomes Worthy Citizens, and beyond what the worſt of their Detractors might have juſtly expected from them. Eſpecially conſidering how ſmall a part of their yearly Revenue remains to the Company, when the Yearly Payments iſſuing thereout, purſuant to the Diſpoſition of the Donors, are deducted.

*Had always an Alderman their Maſter.*

*Intruſted with many Charities.*

*Which they faithfully diſcharged, till the Fire Conſumed their Revenue.*

MOST part of all the Land Houſes and given to the *Grocers* Company, were by the Donors charged with yearly Charities, iſſuing thereout to certain uſes, by them limited and appointed, well nigh amounting to as much as the rent reſerved upon long Leaſes in being, and let before they contracted any of their Debts, as is hereafter mentioned; all or moſt part of which lay in the City of *London*, and the ſame Leaſes many of them were nigh expiring about the time of the late dreadful Fire.

*Though charged with nigh the value, and ſo rather charge then benefit to them.*

Thoſe other Charities which were Sums of Money, given by ſeveral Benefactors unto this Company (there to remain as a Fund) who charged the Company on that account with yearly payments to certain Pariſhes, Places, and Uſes, well nigh as much as the full Intereſt thereof amounted to, or very ſmall advantage to the Company, over and above the ſame, ſo that the Company were neceſſitated to diſpoſe of thoſe Sums of Mony at Intereſt, on the beſt Securities they could get, to enable them to make good thoſe yearly Charities. Many of which Securities might in all probability become very backwards in payment, and ſometimes quite Deſperate; ſo that the Company having dayly Money preſſed upon them, were inforced to accept the ſame at Intereſt, and thereout continued conſtant payment of thoſe yearly Sums. And alſo to accommodate Young Men of their Members with Mony on Security, to ſet up purſuant to the Wills, of ſeveral Donors of that kind (whereof they had not a few Benefactors) ſo that in time by occaſion of many Loſſes and Caſualties of this Nature, it cannot be imagined, but the Company muſt ſuſtain much damage, notwithſtanding all their Care and Endeavours, though they were not in the leaſt ſenſible thereof, till they had long after under greater preſſure tried their Securities, their Credit being very high and in great Reputation.

*In regard many of them were Sums of Money left them to pay yearly Charities.*

*Which being put out on Securities, many proved bad.*

*And ſo loſs accrewed to them.*

But

## *But their Great Debts they Contracted as followeth,* Viz.

ABOUT the Year 1640 his late Majeſty, King *Charles*, the Royal Martyr, having Occaſion for Money in his Exigences, and making his Condition and Deſires known to this Company, as well as others, they did take up Money upon their Common Seal, and to ſupply him did on Security of ſome of his Peers, accommodate his ſaid Majeſty with 4500 *l.* which (the unhappy War Succeeding) is yet unpaid.

*Their great Debts Contracted by Money borrowed on their Common Seal, viz. Anno 1640. To Accommodate K. Char. I. 4500 l.*

Afterwards about the year 1642, this Company in Complyance with other Corporations, and indeed with the whole City, were again required to raiſe 9000 *l.* for the Defence of the Kingdom of *Ireland*, and Relief of his ſaid then Majeſties diſtreſſed Subjects there, which they likewiſe took up upon Security of their Common Seal, and which was never repaid.

*To relieve his ſaid late Majeſties diſtreſſed Subjects in Ireland. ---9000 l.*

And afterwards in the year 1643, in Complyance with other Companies, they were compelled to lend the City of *London*, 4500 *l.* which they in like manner advanced, and had the Common Seal of the City for Security thereof; ſome ſmall part whereof they afterwards received, the reſidue is yet unpaid.

*Anno 1643, Compelled to lend the City of London, ----4500 l.*

*Theſe great Loans* were the only Means that brought this Company at laſt into ſuch Extremity; Yet did they appear to be ſo juſt in their Intentions amongſt themſelves, that having ſo taken theſe great Sums of Money upon their Common Seal of ſeveral Perſons at Intereſt, they made a By-Law in their Court of Aſſiſtants to levy the ſame by Aſſeſſment upon themſelves and their Members, in caſe their Stock and Eſtate fell ſhort to pay it.

*They made a By-Law to levy that Money ſo raiſed, on themſelves if their Stock fell ſhort.*

And afterwards from year to year, as their Creditors call'd for their Principal, (conſtantly paying the Intereſt as it became due) they took up other Moneys (which was daily offered to the Company) and paid them off.

*All which continued on Intereſt duely paid by them.*

About the year 1661. The Company having ſuſtained many loſſes, and their Debts naturally every year encreaſing (the receiving no Intereſt of any to whom they themſelves had ſo lent, and deſpairing of the Principal, and upon Audit of the Wardens Accounts, finding ſuch prodigious Sums every year ſwallowed up in diſcharge of Intereſt) ſeveral of the Members taking the Companies Condition into Conſideration, moved the Court of Aſſiſtants, and a Committee was appointed to inſpect the ſame: And to conſider of ſome way how to obviate the further encreaſe of the Companies Debts, by diſcharging them Gradually. But (other Matters intervening) no progreſs was made therein till afterwards, about the Month of *Auguſt* 1663, upon the like occaſion they were reminded thereof, and the Committee revived, and the further Conſideration reſumed; but having ſpent ſome time in conſidering which way to advance Money, the fair Proſpect they had of advancing Money within a few years by renewing Leaſes of their Eſtates in *London* to diſcharge the greateſt part of their Debts: And having Moneys daily preſſed on them to ſupply their occaſions on Security of their Commen Seal, they were not haſty to propoſe the renewing of their Leaſes; many of them judging it for the Companies Advantage to defer that for ſome time longer, and to endeavour to get in their own Debts. In which Circumſtances they continued, till ſoon after, before they had renewed any Leaſes, it pleaſed God the late dreadful Fire happened, *Anno 1666*, whereby not only their Hall, but their whole Revenue in *London* (ſo highly improvable upon expiring Leaſes) was conſumed; And the ſeveral Members then at the Helm, who (moſt of them greatly ſuffered in their own private Capacities) were ſeparated, and ſo taken up with Care of diſpoſing of themſelves and Families, that very few could attend the Affairs of the Company. And ſo that dreadful Calamity rendred this Company (which ſuſtained ſo great damage therein) utterly uncapable to comply with payment of their Debts and Charities, which plainly appears by the Wardens Books to have been all along before that time punctually paid and diſcharged, as they grew due and were from time to time call'd for and demanded.

*But diſpairing to receive either Principal or Intereſt.*

*And their Debts every year ſwelling they call a Court in 1662. and appointed a Committee to conſider of means to diſcharge it.*

*Again the like in 1663.*

*But the proſpect of Fines on renewing Leaſes (then nigh Expiring) reputed that Conſideration till the Fire in 1666, conſumed all.*

*Till which time the Books make appear they juſtly complied with the v truſt in all things.*

But as ſoon after the Fire as the Members could have freedom from their

own

*The Fire having conſumed their whole Revenue in* London, *on which their Hopes depended to raiſe great Sums by renewing Leaſes then well nigh expired, to pay off their Debts They applyed themſelves to the Parliament on the ſaid By-Law, to aſſeſs their Members (having before 66, paid 30000 l. for Intereſt of 18000 l. they ſo took up) But the Parliament rejecting it (as binding no more than were parties) they were forced to let their Ground to Builders on long Leaſes, and ſmall Rents. And propounded to raiſe by Benevolence what they could not by Fines. And to that purpoſe to get Subſcriptions of Members.*

*Sir* John Cutler, *to encourage them therein, Erected the Stately Building in the Garden.*

*To whoſe Memory (after the Hall was built) they cauſed his Statue to be erected in the Parlour.*

own diſtracting Affairs, they took the Companies deplorable Condition into their Conſideration, and found they had no refuge now left but to propound their Ground to Builders for long Leaſes, and advance what Monies they could by way of Fines. And (that they might leave nothing unattempted) their Stock and Eſtate by theſe providences falling ſhort (to pay thoſe great Debts ſo contracted) they applied themſelves (on their ſaid By-Law) to the Parliament then ſitting, ſtating their Caſe how great Debts they owed, and how they became ſo indebted, to advance thoſe great Sums which they could never hope to receive; and that although they had received no Intereſt, yet they had before that time paid for Intereſt of the Moneys (they had ſo taken up) nigh 30000 *l.* And therefore pray'd an Act of Parliament to put their ſaid By-Law in Execution by Aſſeſſment on their Members. But that was rejected as Impracticable, that it ſhould bind any more than thoſe who were Parties to the making of it, who were then moſt of them dead. Whereupon (as the only means they had then left) they endeavored to raiſe Money by letting their Ground; and what ſhould fall ſhort therein, they propounded to make up among themſelves by a Voluntary Subſcription of their Members; for whoſe Encouragement Sir *John Cutler*, a worthy Member, at his own proper Charges, erected the ſtately Fabrick out of its Aſhes, which is now their Parlour, and Entertaining Room over it in the Garden, hoping thereby to incite other Members to follow; ſhewing himſelf Zealous, beyond all expreſſion, to raiſe and reſtore this Company out of its Ruines and Calamity.

To whoſe Memory the Company (as ſoon as they had afterwards Re-built and enlarged their Hall) in purſuance of ſeveral Orders of the Court of Aſſiſtants, in grateful Acknowledgment, cauſed his Lively Statue in Effigie in white Marble to be erected on the right Hand at the Upper end of the Parlour. And that the ſame may ſurvive the Caſual Accidents of Fire, and Canker of Envy, my Deſire is hereby to record the Memory of ſo Worthy a Benefactor, to the end his * Name (when Time, the Devourer of all things, may have decayed his Statue) may be freſh and flouriſhing amongſt the Generations to come, who ſhall in after Ages ſucceed happy Members of this Society.

*Marmora Maronii vincunt Monumenta libelli.

*They continue Endeavours to raiſe Money by Subſcriptions.*

*And propoſe to pay their Creditors, part down, and the other by two payments at 5 and 10 years: And great Sums are raiſed and paid.*

*But ſome Members backwards and ſome Creditors (ill adviſed) Sue the Company, which ſtops the Work till many Members, who might have been good Benefactors, dyed.*

And in order to carry on ſo good a Work, a general Summons was ordered of the Members and a Committee appointed, and ſeveral meetings had amongſt themſelves to obtain Subſcriptions (wherein a good Progreſs was made) and their ground propounded to Builders for what Fines they could get under the old Rents, (which they could not much leſſen in regard of their Charities iſſuing thereout, wherewith their Donors charged them) in order to advance Money; which accordingly was done, and ſeveral Meetings had with their Creditors. To whom they propounded to pay their Principal Money, part down, and the Reſidue by two Payments at 5 and 10 years, to be ſecured by their Common Seal. Moſt of their Creditors, complying with this fair propoſal, conſidering that the Money ſo to be raiſed, muſt be advanced even great part of it by a free Contribution, and Voluntary Gift of the Members, who many of them Liberally contributed; and great Sums were raiſed and paid: But whilſt ſome of the Members were purſuing this good Deſign, and the Company in a hopeful way of wholly diſcharging themſelves, the unkindneſs of ſome and backwardneſs of other Members, who ſhould have followed ſo good Examples, gave ſuch Interruption as occaſioned ſome of their Creditors (inſtigated by inconſiderate and ſelf-ſeeking Agents) unadviſedly to ſue the Company, and the very Ruines of their Hall to be ſequeſtred and ſeized; although thoſe Creditors, afterwards repented themſelves thereof, as ſenſible they had not only put themſelves to great Charges (which they could never be

(re-imburſed

re-imburſed) but had thereby injured the reſt of the Creditors in diſcouraging ſo good a deſign, and obſtructing the gifts of ſo many Worthy Members, of whom ſeveral afterwards died, before their help could be again ſeaſonably ſought for, which wholly Eclipſed the Reputation of the Company, rendring them (for the preſent) uncapable of further paying; till ſome time after ſeveral Worthy Members continuing their Endeavours (to carry on ſo good a Work begun) procured Money to be raiſed to pay off part, and more to be lent to diſcharge the reſt of the Sequeſtrations, by Perſons, to whom their Creditors aſſigned the ſame by direction of the Company, and by letting their Lands in *Ireland*, ſinking the Rent to 10 *l. per Annum*; and thereby, as alſo by Benevolences and Gifts of their Members, paid off a good part of their Debts: and to ſupply what they could not otherwiſe for the preſent advance, they took up Money upon Security of the Equity of Redemption of their whole Eſtate. Whereby, it plainly appears, they uſed all ways and means they were Capable of, to raiſe Money, reſerving nothing but the growing hope of their ground-Rent, which they are in Juſtice bound to preſerve as a Seed for their Poſterity; they having already paid, of their own Benevolence, and what they have ſo borrowed on Security of the remaining part of their Eſtate (which they have taken up for 7 years at 4 *l. per Cent.*) far above the real value (to be ſold) of what they receive thereout, over and above the yearly Charities, wherewith the ſame are charged by the Donors: However (clouded with theſe Circumſtances) the Work went but ſlowly on; the Generality of the Members, that ſhould have now contributed their Aſſiſtance to diſcharge the whole, being unſatisfied, as looking on the Gifts of ſome particular Perſons, to ſignifie little towards ſo great a Work, unleſs ſome better Encouragement might be given to procure a Subſcription of the whole Body of Members; being of opinion, That ſo long as the Hall lay thus Ruinous, it wholly diſcouraged all. And under theſe ſad Circumſtances the Company continued, until it pleaſed God to move Sir *John Moore*, (a Worthy Member of this Society, who taking into his Conſideration its deplorable Condition, every year leſſening in Reputation by reaſon of their Hall thus in Ruines, which not only diſcouraged Men to take their Freedoms, and Apprentices to be bound there, and Benefactors both in their Life-time and by their Wills, from their Liberality; but alſo rendred the Society almoſt Contemptible;) Out of his Kindneſs and good Will towards this his own Company, was very inclinable at his own Charge to repair the Great Hall; hoping thereby to encourage other Members by his Example to contribute their Aſſiſtance, either in re-edifying or augmenting the reſidue of their ancient Seat: As the only means left to promote an Univerſal compliance of all other Members, according to their ſeveral Degrees and Abilities, in liberal Contributions towards diſcharge of the great Arrears of their Debts and Charities: Which being made known to a Court of Aſſiſtants, Sir *James Edwards*, (then Maſter of the Company, being preſent) was pleaſed to make it the Requeſt of that Court to him, on behalf of the Company, to purſue ſuch his good Intention: Acquainting him, that he doubted not but it ſhould be followed with ſo happy Succeſs, that the *Grocers Hall*, which may juſtly claim precedency of all Halls and publick Places within this City of *London*, for Scituation, and many other Conveniences might, in a ſhort time, be made the moſt commodious Habitation for a Lord Mayor. And in order to carry on ſo good a Work (encouraged therein by ſeveral other Worthy Members then preſent) it was referred to the Wardens, together (with ſome other Members) calling to their Aſſiſtance ſuch Workmen and others as they ſhould think fit, to conſider of, and propound a Model for ſuch additional Building, in ſuch place as might make the Hall very Commodious, both for Ornament and Uſe; to anſwer ſo noble a Deſign. Upon Report of which Committee, ſoon after Sir *John Frederick*, Sir *James Edwards*, Sir *Henry Tulſe*, and ſeveral other Aldermen and Worthy Members, agreed to contribute liberally towards this additional Building: For which a Preamble was ordered, and accordingly drawn and engroſſed, whereby thoſe that were Subſcribers, declared how ſenſible they were, that if the Hall ſhould long continue under theſe Circumſtances, not only all that had been done would be wholly fruitleſs, but all that remained (for which they were Truſtees to the Generations to come) would ſoon waſte into nothing, which would reproachfully render the preſent Members moſt ungrateful to their Anceſtors, whoſe Names ſtill Bloſſom in what remains of thoſe Pious Monuments of their Charities, and obnoxious to thoſe who ſhould ſucceed happy Members of this Society.

*Yet they uſed all meanes poſſible to raiſe Money, letting their Land in Ireland, and ſinking the Rent to 10 l. per Annum. And diſcharged ſuch Creditors by that and their own Benevolence as ſtood in moſt need. And part to many others.*

*But their Hall (being in Ruines) was Sequeſtred by Creditors, which wholly diſcouraged both Freemen and Apprentices, they continue after to borrow money on their Revenue, and had Sequeſtration aſſigned.*

*All which notwithſtanding diſcouraged particular Members further to contribute (whilſt under ſuch Circumſtances)*

*Till Sir John Moore, Anno 1634. begun.*

*And other Worthy Members followed to rebuild and enlarge the Hall, as the only means to remove their Reproach, and to encourage Benefactors and Freemen and Apprentices to preſerve a Succeſſion.*

*The Wardens and Committee appointed to purſue the Work.*

*Several worthy Members contribute to make it a Seat for a Lord Mayor*

*As the only meanes to preſerve the Company*

And therefore concluded this great Work to be the only leading means left to preſerve the Society. And that, as Sir *John Cutler* had ſo long ſince for thoſe very ends, at his own Charges begun; and Sir *John Moore* had now undertaken to repair and Beautifie the great Hall: So they held themſelves highly obliged to promote and carry on ſo excellent a Work. And having cauſed the Scite and Fabrick of the Hall to be ſurveyed, and finding, that with ſome more additional Building (than already propounded to be erected) it might be made a more commodious and convenient Habitation for the Chief Magiſtrate of this City, than any other ever was before within the City of *London*: Therefore, that it might anſwer all theſe good ends, and might with all poſſible ſpeed be carried on and finiſhed, in order to invite and encourage all the Members to contribute towards payment of the Companies Debts and Arrears of Charities, they liberally ſubſcribed and paid towards the raiſing and finiſhing of ſuch additional Building, declaring themſelves (if occaſion ſhould be afterwards) to be further aſſiſting to compleat ſo good a Work; not doubting but their Brethren, the reſt of the Members, would every one follow, according to their Degrees and Qualities. And that the Beautifying and repairing their Hall might not prove a Bait to ſuch Creditors (if any ſhould be) as formerly ſeized the Ruines of the ſame, to endeavour again a Sequeſtration againſt it; but might anſwer thoſe good ends ſo by them deſigned, the Company, for Encouragemt of their Members in their liberal Contributions towards this great Work, by advice of Learned Council conveyed the ſame, and all their Revenues, and the Equity of Redemption thereof confirmed ſince by ſeveral Decrees (ſubject to the ſaid former Securities) to Truſtees, to ſecure (as far as the ſame will extend) the yearly payment of thoſe Charities, for which they are chargeable to ſeveral Pariſhes, Priſons, and Uſes by their Benefactors (who heretofore paid into their hands ſeveral great Sums of Money for thoſe Uſes (for which now no Fond remains) that they might alſo thereby not only diſcharge their Conſciences towards God, and the Memory of ſuch Pious Benefactors, but alſo avoid the chargeable Proſecutions of the Commiſſioners upon the Statute for Charitable Uſes, who have of late put this Company every year to exceeding great Charges and Expences.

*Not doubting but their Brethren would all follow ſo good Examples to finiſh this Work and pay their Debts.*

*And that it may anſwer the deſigned end, the Hall and whole Revenue (being all deſigned for Charity) is by Conveyance and Decree ſettled to ſecure their yearly Charities wherewith the Company is chargeable.*

Thus have I endeavoured to lay down the true State of the Company of *Grocers*, as it relates to themſelves and their Creditors, in their preſent Condition; the Subſtance whereof having been declared by way of Anſwer to ſeveral Creditors Bills (who to no purpoſe had put themſelves to Charge in Suing the Company) ſeemed to give great Satisfaction unto the Learned Council, and other Perſons unconcerned, who before were ignorant of the true State of the Companies Caſe: And may happily be a means to divert others from proſecuting any ſuch chargeable Suits againſt the Company, in the event whereof they cannot promiſe to themſelves ſo much Benefit, as they may hope to ſee without it. And ſince that, the Commiſſioners for Charitable Uſes, having been likewiſe informed of the Companies Condition, and what they had ſo deſigned, and were in proſecution of, to preſerve their Reputation (beyond what they could either by Law or Equity be compelled to) were ſo well ſatisfied therein, that they adviſed their Creditors, rather to apply themſelves to the Wardens in a kind and friendly manner, and encourage the Members to go on in ſo good a Work, than in vain (waſting their Pariſh Stock) again to diſturb them with Suits to diſcourage the Members, and thereby, not only to hazard the loſs of their own, but to wrong all others concerned with them. And alſo ſeveral of their Creditors, who before were inſtigated, by ſome unadviſed Perſons, to give the Company diſturbance, as ſoon as they were ſo informed of their Caſe, better conſidered their own Intereſt, and wholly forbore: Which not only afforded great Freedom and Liberty to the Wardens, and Aſſiſtants, to attend the Companies Service, but alſo great Encouragement to Sir *James Edwards*, Mr. *Beale*, and Mr. *Bourne*, the then Maſter and Wardens, to begin; and to Sir *Henry Tulſe*, Mr. *Box*, Mr. *Winch*, and Mr. *Reeve*, the Succeeding Maſter and Wardens, to carry on that great Work of finiſhing the Hall, in ſo ſhort a time (as is almoſt incredible to relate) for Reception of Sir *John Moore* (the ſucceeding Lord Mayor) at *Michaelmas* following. Eſpecially conſidering the ſame was many ways (upon further conſideration had) enlarged, and made more convenient (then at firſt was intended) with many accommodations (not at firſt thought of) to render it ſo exactly (as indeed it is) far excelling any Hall that now is (or probably ever was) in *London*; ſo that the whole charge of compleating the ſame, I believe with as good

*The Companies caſe thus ſtated, having been ſet forth by way of Anſwer to Bills exhibited againſt them by Creditors, gave ſatisfaction ſo as to prevent others from troubling them in vain.*

*As alſo the Commiſſioners for charitable uſes, when they underſtood their caſe, adviſed their Creditors to deſiſt, and not waſte their Pariſh-Stock in a vain proſecution, and to apply themſelves to the Wardens in a friendly Manner.*

*So that ſeveral Creditors, who ill-adviſed, had given them diſturbance, deſiſted, which gave freedom to the Wardens and Committee to purſue the Building, and to the Members attending the Companies affairs, ſo as the Hall was finiſhed and with incredible Celerity, wisky compleated.*

Husbandry

Husbandry as was poſſible to be managed, yet ſwells to double the ſum which was at firſt propounded to be diſburſed, and therefore called for further aſſiſtance of more Members, than at firſt was deſigned, to contribute to the ſame. Which Work being ſo compeatly finiſhed, manifeſtly appears to have been the only means left to keep the Company upon a Foundation, which otherwiſe, muſt in a ſhort time, have naturally diſſolved of it ſelf; for that the Apprentices and Freemen, of any eſtate or value, who before wholly declined, have now dayly encreaſed, as having a proſpect, by what is viſible, of a proſperous carrying on the whole Work anſwerable thereto: And that though this charge of the building amounted to a great Sum, yet when 'tis conſidered, that the Company may probably receive yearly (if they pleaſe) as much as the intereſt of the Monies therein diſburſed amounts to; and that ſo great a part thereof, as was already paid, would not have been given upon any other account, and that the work now compleated, is in its ſelf of far greater value, then all the other part of the Companies Revenue, (over and above the Charities iſſuing thereout) and that thoſe ſeveral Sums ſo ſubſcribed, were thus freely given by ſeveral Worthy Members, on purpoſe for this great Work; that it might encourage the whole Members, freely and liberally to contribute towards the reſidue of this Work and the Debts: To which end I have, to the beſt of my Capacity, compoſed theſe Sheets for their Information and Encouragement, to follow ſo good Examples. That ſo great and good a Work, wherein ſo many thouſands are and may be concerned, may be cheerfully carried on, and they may all (as Fellow-helpers) have the honour to be recorded amongſt the Generations to come, The happy Repairers and Reſtorers of the Company of *Grocers*.

*Which Work, though it amounted to a greater charge than at firſt propounded, in regard of many additions unt thought on, to make it Commodious, yet it anſwers all in the advantage it gives, being moſt a free benevolence which would have been gotten for no other uſe; and it is a clear augmentation and the beſt branch of the Revenue, and was the only means to remove the reproach, encourage Freemen and Apprentices, and encourage Benefactors. That it might move every good Member to contribute towards their Debts and Charities. This Book is compoſed for their Information and Encouragement.*

## POSTSCRIPT.

# POSTSCRIPT.

*The Company, when the Quo Warranto was brought, was very defective as to By-Laws and Ordinances, having none made that are extant since King Henry the 8th's time. And those (though fitted to the Distempers of that time,) were most obsolete and out of use now. Which might have proved fatal, had not the Company had a Quietus by their late Charter. Wherein (by aid of our late Master, the Earl of Mulgrave, and Mr. Secretary Jenkins, interceding with his late Majesty) are several priviledges granted this Company: First, a Confirmation of a Charter granted to this Company by King Henry the 6th. of the Office of Garbling, in all places in England, (London only excepted.) Secondly, The Mystery of Grocers is explained, and all Druggists, Confectioners, Tobacconists, and Tobacco-Cutters in London, and 3 miles compass are Incorporated herein, and never to be separated from this Company. And positively injoyning all Persons using this Mystery, As Grocers, Confectioners, Druggists, Tobacconists or Tobacco-Cutters, for ever after to bind their Apprentices to Members of this Company, in order to preserve a Succession. And for an accommodation of such as have no other friend, there is an Order of the Court of Aldermen, and likewise of the Assistants, for them to be bound to the Beadle of the Grocers, and turned over to their Masters. The abuse of taking Freedom by Patrimony set forth, and the Error detected. That it is only to extend to the City, but not to the Mystery, unless the Son is of the same Mystery, where of his Father was Free.*

THE Company of *Grocers*, at the time when the *Quo Warranto* was brought against them, *Anno* 1684. were (of all Companies in *London*) under the most irregular Government, as to By-Laws and Ordinances, to warrant their Actions and Proceedings, not having any extant (that I could find) made and legally Confirmed since the time of King *Henry* the 8th. In whose Raign (by search) I found on Record, in the Town-Clerks Office, many suited to the Distempers and Nature of the Mystery of the *Grocery* in those days; but having taken Copies of them (nigh an hundred Sheets) on perusal I found them most Obsolete and out of Use, and very defective to cure, or antidote the Diseases or Corruptions of the present Constitution of the Company. So that the Renewing, and Confirmation of our Charter, proved an happy opportunity to this Company, not only to have a relaxation and *quietus* of all Offences and Misprisions, that might have proved fatal, through defect of such Sanctions of Government (which are essentially necessary to every Corporation:) But by the aid and favour of the Right Honourable the Earl of *Mulgrave*, now Lord Chamberlain of his Majesties Houshold, then our Master, and Mr. Secretary *Jenkins* (on account of the true friendship he bore to *John Jeffreys* Esq; one of our most worthy Members) interceding with his late Majesty King *Charles* the Second, of Blessed Memory (who graciously condescended to own himself our Master) our Charter was enlarged with these following advantages, (*viz.*) A Confirmation of a Charter made by King *Henry* the 6th, granting the Office of Garbling to this Company, in all places in this Kingdom (the City of *London* only excepted;) which priviledge, by non-usage for some years, was grown almost out of knowledge to the Members, until by search for other Charters, I found it on Record in the Tower.

By declaring the Species of the Mystery, which before in the former Charter, was expressed generally under the Denomination of *Grocery*; But in our new Charter, is declared to contain all Druggists, Confectioners, Tobacconists and Tobacco-Cutters, as having been branched out of, and bred by *Grocers*, (there being then no Company of them, or any of them) all these, as well as *Grocers*, in *London*, or within 3 Miles of the Liberties of the same, are incorporated into this Company, and never to be separated from us, or otherwise incorporated; with liberty given to all Persons using any part of the Mystery, whether Free of any other Company or no, to incorporate themselves therein; not judging it reasonable to compell them, (as Men that have born Office in one Parish, from thence into any other) to do the like.

But it positively enjoyns them all to bind their Apprentices for the future, to Members of the *Grocers* Company, and to be turned over to their Masters to serve their Apprenticeships, and all (as well those whose terms are expired, as) those that are not to take their Freedoms of the *Grocers*, in order to preserve a Succession in this Company, which otherwise must in few years have sunk, for want of Members, to the total Ruin and Destruction of their Charities and Government. And for their Accommodation in that behalf, there is an order of the Court of Aldermen, as also of the Court of Assistants, for the Beadle of the *Grocers* Company, to be the Medium (in cases where they have no other Friend of the Company) for their Apprentices to be bound to him, and so turned over to the Master whom he is to serve; which clause in the Charter for so doing, Mr. Attorney General, and some other Council (with whom the Company advised) did much Scruple at first, by reason of the Custom (supposed to be) in *London*, for a Freeman's Son to have his Freedom by Patrimony (at his own Election) of whatsoever Company his Father was a Member, though the Son had been bound Apprentice to a Member of another Mystery; wherein (upon due Examination) it was found to be a vulgar Error, and a great Mistake by long usage grown into a Custom, extending this Custom of Patrimony (which is restrained only to a Freedom of the City) to every

Company

Company in the City, whereas the Apprentice though he may have his Freedom (whether he Serve or no) of the City by his Fathers Copy, yet he ought (according to the Original deſign and intent of every Charter of Incorporation) to take his Freedom of his proper Myſtery, where there is any Corporation of ſuch Myſtery. For that every Myſtery hath been incorporated to no other end; but to have all their Members, and all uſing their Myſtery, well Governed by proper Judges *viz.* by Men beſt knowing and experienced therein; whereas the contrary practice hath introduced a ſpurious Mixture in all Societies; and cauſed all abuſes, poſſibly in the Government of the City, and made Men as lawleſs and ungovernable, as their corrupt and looſe Principles will lead them to.

As for Example, a Member of the Barber Chirurgeons, puts his Son Apprentice to a Carpenter or Black-Smith, or any other Mechanick trade, if the Son (having thus ſerved his Apprenticeſhip) out of Pride, Prejudice or ſiniſter end, ſhall take his Freedom by Patrimony of the Barber Chirurgeons, (whereof his Father was a Member) he is thereupon Sworn to obſerve the By-Laws and Ordinances, made for well governing of the Barber Chirurgeons which is to Bleed, dreſs Wounds, *&c.* things unknown to him and impoſſible for him to obſerve, and (which is worſe) makes him never after mindful of his Oath, and frees him from all Obligation to take notice of, or to obſerve thoſe Ordinances made for well governing the Carpenters, which is his proper Myſtery; and ſo he becomes a lawleſs Perſon. And from thence in that, as in other like Caſes, the end and deſign of all Corporations is totally abuſed and defeated, beſides the great wrong done to the Company, which is thus deprived of its Members, which ſhould ſupport the charge and grandeur of their Society, of which Injury no Company in *London*, have more cauſe to complain then the *Grocers*. But all other Perſons uſing a calling, of which there is no Corporation, in being, as *Norwich*-Factors Merchants, *&c.* dare at liberty to take their Freedom, of what Company they have ſerved to, or by Patrimony of their Fathers, or by Redemption of what Company they pleaſe: But having once made their Election, they are obliged to continue therein, unleſs they ſhall be tranſlated thence by order of the Court of Aldermen, and conſent of the Company into another.

*As for Example, that a Carpenter, or Blackſmith, ought not take his Freedom of the Barber Chirurgeons, though his Father was of this Company a Member.*

And whereas two Cauſes have been aſſigned for diſcouragement of Perſons to take their Freedom of the *Grocers*, (*viz.*)

*The Cauſes diſcouraging Perſons from taking their Freedom of the Grocers viz. the great charge and burthen.*

1 The great charge they were incident to bear above other Companies.

2 The reproach contracted by reaſon of their Hall lying in Ruins and under Sequeſtration, and the great Debts they owe. Both which by the Prudence and Care of our Government, (now bleſſed be God) are removed and on the contrary, greater Arguments may be uſed to encourage ſuch as left us to return, and others to Incorporate themſelves into this Company, beſides the many ancient priviledges, which the Members of the *Grocers* Company are Intituled unto: For eaſe of their Members they do not take Fines to excuſe them of Warden or Steward as heretofore, but in ſpecial caſes, neither do they call them on the Cloathing (as in moſt other Companies) but when it is moſt manifeſt they have been of long continuance, or are of ſufficient Ability, freely to accept it; and ſo it is uſually, a long time before it comes to a Young mans turn, to bear any charge or burthen here; and when it doth, the charge of Livery, Steward, and other Offices, are all reduced to a very low and eaſie rate; or if they Fine, or hold, the Charge is not much above half ſo much as it was heretofore; all ſo ſettled by the Court of Aſſiſtants, for eaſe and encouragement of their Members.

*The reproach of their Hall in Ruins and under Sequeſtration are now removed.*

*And on the contrary for their encouragement (beſides the many Priviledges in this Company) the charge of every Office is not half ſo much.*

*And none are ſuffered to Fine, and if they do it is not above half ſo much as it was heretofore.*

Our Hall having been new built and beautified, there is a moſt certain Ground-rent, by decree ſettled to anſwer all our yearly Charities. As well (where we have, as where before we had no Fond) to ſecure the due and conſtant yearly payment of them to their proper Object, to remove all that dayly Clamour and Reflection, which for ſeveral years paſt in all places, rendred them reproachful throughout the City and Kingdom.

*There is proviſion made for the due payment of all our Charities, which for many years have been too much neglected and occaſioned great Clamour and Reproach on the Company.*

Our By-Laws by moſt learned Counſell are ſettled, purſuant to our late Charter, ſo enlarged, our ancient Uſages and Priviledges, for well Governing and Ordering our Members and Myſtery in every kind regulated and augmented, and ſupplyed with addition of new, ſuited to all our defects, which will without doubt encourage our Benefactors, liberally to contribute towards diſcharge of the remainder of our Companies Debts, ſo that there cannot be a better foundation laid to raiſe and reſtore out Company. As it was 100 years

*Our By-Laws and Ordinances are with great Care, and by Learned Counſels prepared for well Ordering and Governing our Members and all uſing the Myſtery. For encouragment of all who obſerve their Duty.*

*And alſo for puniſhment of all Trangreſſors, and ſo to encourage our Benefactors, that this Company be reſtored, as it was a 100 years ſince a Nurſery of Charities, and Seminary of good Citizens. And that this Company may no longer ſuffer either by not obſerving or Trangreſſing them. The Heads of ſuch as concern all uſing the Myſtery in* London *and the Preciſts aforeſaid will be Printed and Publiſhed, that all may have notice to Conform thereunto.*

ſince a Seminary of good Citizens and Nurſery of the beſt Charities in *London*, and ſo conſequently, no Apprentice can well or probably may hope to be planted in a better Corporation, in order to his future advantage.

And to the end that all Perſons concerned uſing this Myſtery, either as *Grocer*, *Druggiſt*, *Confectioner*, *Tobacconiſt*, or *Tobacco-Cutter* in *London*, and within 3 Miles of the Liberties thereof, may have notice thereof, and give due obedience and conformity to what hath been ſo deſigned by the ſaid Charter, By-laws, and ancient Uſages, and this Company ſuffer no longer by their Defaults, either in not obſerving, or trangreſſing the ſame; the Heads thereof will in ſhort time be Printed and Publiſhed, and left at their ſeveral Dwellings, and places of abode, for their Caution and better Information. And certainly all this conſidered; it cannot be doubted but every Member of this Company, will call to mind the great Obligation he lies under (if he will mind his Oath, either as a good Chriſtian or an honeſt Man) in and by all things according to his Power, on all opportunities, not only to publiſh and make known unto all Perſons concerned, what is ſo required of them, but will alſo move and excite them, by the beſt Arguments and Ways they can, ſpeedily to comply with their duty herein, and ſo avoid the penalties and charges they will otherwiſe expoſe themſelves to, in a chargeable way, and be compelled at laſt to yield obedience and conformity thereunto.

THE

# THE CONCLUSION.

HAving thus ſtated the condition of the Company, as it long flouriſhed in Splendor, and gradually through theſe and various providences, and the ſad effects of War and Fire: How it groaned under ſo great preſſure in its ſadder Circumſtances: And having ſet before you the happy encouragement already now given, and the Methods propounded again to raiſe and reſtore this Company to its former ſplendor: I now turn to the Honorable and Worthy Members of whom it conſiſts: And you my noble and good Maſters, under whom I hold my Station in this place, I moſt humbly pray you (of your wonted Benignity) to bear with my Zeal and Freedom, and the boldneſs I aſſume moſt humbly to move you, to ſet to your helping hands in this Work, ſo excellent and acceptable to God and every good Man. *The Concluſion by Addreſs. Moſt humbly moving to the great Work of Charity.*

1. By remembring you of thoſe eminent good Charities, for which thoſe worthy Members who went before you in former times, and are to this day celebrated; and have left us ſuch grounds (as being now built) gives us the proſpect of a great Revenue when the Leaſes are out, which (though far diſtant) are and will be every year (like uſefull Timber) a more growing hope to Poſterity. *From example of their Pious Anceſtors.*

2. That you would not only think it enough to praiſe them, but be provoked by a generous Emulation, to follow their Example, liberally and bountifully to afford your Aſſiſtance, not only to ſecure, but alſo to encreaſe this growing hope, that our Burthen and Reproach being removed, our Benefactors may be encouraged, and this Society ſtill preſerved a Seminary of good Merchants, and as a Treaſury of Charity; That ſo the ſucceeding Generations may bleſs and honour you, as much as you do thoſe Worthy Members in former times, when your Names ſhall be recorded, as Raiſers and Reſtorers of the Company of Grocers. *Whoſe Foundation they have to build on. And preſſed with a five-fold Argument drawn from the nature of this great Duty.*

3. That what you do, you would do ſpeedily, whereby you will draw on others that need quickning and encouragement by your Example, and in ſo doing, you will not only have the Comfort of what you do your ſelves, but be the happy promoters in others, of what the Company will have cauſe to bleſs God, and give you thanks for.

4. That you will conſider how great a deliverance you had to eſcape the late dreadful Fire with your lives; and how gracious God hath been to you ſtill, to entruſt you with his Talents for improvement (as Stewards) in his Work: And that this Company which ſuffered ſo much in that Calamity, hath no other hands but yours to repair her breaches.

5. That you can have no ſuch true comfort in the World on a Sick bed, or in any other Calamity, as to be conſcious of doing good Works of this Nature, when as faithful Stewards of that which is not conſigned to you into Property, but into Truſt, you have (as good and faithful Servants) but well diſpoſed of a parcel of your great Lords Eſtate, according to his own Will.

And for your encouragement, this is a Work moſt acceptable to God, and inviting to every good Man, the Redemption Relief and Support of the moſt Ancient and Illuſtrious Corporation in this Metropolis, with all her numerous Offspring, the Aged, the Widdow, and the Fatherleſs, the Blind, the Lame, and the Impotent, all that God (who is Wiſdom and Goodneſs) himſelf commends (after his own example) to your Charity, and as capable of Almes, with moſt extenſive Bleſſings, promiſes of Rewards, and to be neglected under the moſt ſevere Threatnings and Puniſhments. *Encouraging it.*

And further this your kindneſs will not periſh as a Meals Meat, or a Draught of cold Water (though that has encouragement a Man would think, that will give credit to our Saviour himſelf) but this your Charity will be as a laſting Seed, laid on the pureſt Foundation of thoſe Holy and good Men, who were our Pious Founders, and whoſe Names after ſo many hundred years, ſmell ſweet and bloſſom in the duſt; and are now Bleſſed with God, receiving the Recompenſe of their Reward, whilſt their Works follow *As an Object moſt acceptable to God. And inviting to every Good Man.*

them

them and praise them in the Gates, so that what you shall here bestow, will be to open and feed those Fountains, as their lasting and refreshing Comforts and Relief.

For though good Works in themselves (as flowing back to the Fountain from whence they spring) can be no way meritorious, yet they have been always so acceptable to God, that we find in every Age, Estates and Honor continue longest in the Name and Family, of such as have been most diffusive in Works of this Nature, that if it were modest to render a reason, why so many great Estates, are sooner wasted by a loose Heir, than gotten by his frugal Parent, it may be well presumed, it is because so little of it was bestowed to such uses, when Men return so little to God, to whom they owe all they have. And most assuredly an Article in your Account at the great Audit, will be sooner allowed to cover many other Errors, then what is thus disposed: And now as Spice is a great Ingredient in this Mystery, and is a part of your Armes, so I pray consider how Almes in Scripture are called, an Odor of a sweet-smelling Savor; and it is these perfumes that will prove acceptable to God, and have a good Savor amongst Men. So I conclude, with my Prayers to Almighty God, to encline all your Hearts, according to your several Degrees and Qualities in this great Work, to acquit your selves as good Men, and as good Citizens and Grocers. And that I may be happy in discharge of my Duty, which alone moved me to make this my humble Address to you all; and shall be my endeavours to perform, as

And not only as the best means to secure what they shall leave to their Children and Posterity. (Which without this usually is sooner by those spent, than got by their Parents) But will for ever remain.

A sweet perfume in the Nostrils of Men.

And an Odor of a sweet-smelling Savor to God.

*Right Honourable,*

Grocers-*Hall.*
*Jan.* 1. 168⅝.

*Right Worshipful,*

*And the rest of the Worthy Members,*

YOUR

*Most Humble, and*

*Faithful Servant,*

W. Ravenhill, *Clerk of the Society of the Mystery of the* Grocers.

*Most humbly Dedicated the first day of this New Year.*

Non Donum, sed Donantis Animum.

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FINIS.